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MOTOR POWER ON FARM, ESTATE AND ROAD

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VOL. XLIII.—No. 1107.

SATURDAY, MARCH 23rd, 1918.

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REGISTERED AT THE G.P.O. AS A NEWSPAPER.



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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Our Frontispiece: <i>The Countess Cadogan</i>	283, 284
Armies and Agriculture. (Leader)	284
Country Notes	285
<i>The Dreamer</i> , by V. H. Friedlaender	285
Nursery Song, by Anne F. Brown	286
Vegetable Growing at Aldenham: <i>The Possibilities of Intensive Cultivation</i> . (Illustrated)	287
Agricultural Topics of the Hour	290
Horses in the War.—II: <i>Their Welfare on Active Service</i> , by A. Sidney Galley. (Illustrated)	291
An Old Story, by W. J. Ferrar	293
Country Home: <i>Gravely Manor</i> . (Illustrated)	294
Literature	294
<i>Memories of Midland Politics: 1885-1910</i> (Francis Allston Channing).	294
In the Garden	302
Correspondence	303
<i>The Hope of Immortality</i> (Rev. Edward Shillito); <i>The Starling as a Pet</i> ; <i>An Owl's Nest at the Front</i> ; <i>Rearing Calves on Goat's Milk</i> (Rosslyn Manning); "The Gentleman who Pays the Rent"; <i>The Destruction of Trees</i> ; <i>An Ancient Wheat Stack</i> (R. Fortune); <i>A Patriotic Golf Club</i> ; <i>Herdity</i> (Earl Buchan); <i>Uses for Buttermilk</i> (G. Lees); <i>A Car Patrol in the Desert</i> ; <i>The Stoat and the Ermine</i> ; <i>The Cultivation of Sunflower Seed</i> ; <i>Beet Sugar</i> (T. Hamilton Fox); <i>Uncontrolled Dogs</i> (Harding Cox, F.Z.S.); <i>Zulu Rickshaw Men</i> ; <i>An Old Sussex Dovecote</i> ; <i>Guillimot's Eggs as a Substitute for Hens' Eggs</i> (Stanley Crook); <i>Bitter-pit in Apples</i> (W. R. Portal); <i>Epitaph on an Auctioneer</i> (George W. Metcalfe).	303
English Furniture in Sir George Donaldson's Collection.—IV, by Percy Macquoid. (Illustrated)	306
Flower Hunting on the Roof of the World.	308
The Automobile World. (Illustrated)	xviii.
Machinery Notes for Modern Farmers, by Ploughshare. (Illustrated)	lx.
Modes and Moods. (Illustrated)	lxxii.
From the Editor's Bookshelf	lxxiv.
Insurance	lxxvi.

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ARMIES AND AGRICULTURE

IN view of the figures published in a *Times* article of March 18th, it is impossible for us to survey the advance made in military gardening without a considerable amount of satisfaction. The movement has taken root in good earnest. In France, with which we were more immediately concerned at the time of the agitation regarding military gardens, 50,000 acres are being cultivated behind the French lines. At Salonika 7,000 acres, in Mesopotamia 700,000 acres, and large areas in Egypt, Palestine and Cyprus have been brought under the plough. Not only is this so, but the movement has spread homewards, and every military camp in the United Kingdom and, practically speaking, every gun station and aerodrome has its garden. The men may have been seen digging industriously in all the fine weather of March, digging in the turf and preparing to set or sow potatoes and other crops. This is a splendid development out of the state of affairs which existed last autumn.

When we took the matter up France was leading the way: the movement began there as early as 1914 in a very tentative manner; in 1915 it had gained a little in volume and strength, but not until 1916 did it begin to approach the importance which it has now assumed. About the end of 1916 and 1917 the French authorities, with the collaboration of expert gardeners, tackled the business very seriously, and now cultivation is being carried on extensively behind the lines of our Allies.

This state of things prevailed during our visit to France at the end of last year. At the British camps there was a little cultivation, especially in the neighbourhood of hospitals, the huts of the Y.M.C.A., horse establishments and similar places, but the work was patchy and unorganised. A considerable divergence of opinion existed among military leaders as to its practicability. Some were enthusiastic about it; others declared that their men already had as much to do as they could undertake, and they were very averse from increasing their burden. A great deal of argument and persuasion had to be employed before the matter was set about in earnest. However, it was taken up energetically by Sir John Cowans and others. Lord Radnor was ultimately appointed Director, and at the beginning of the present year a Committee was appointed with Lord Harcourt as chairman. A few figures are given by our contemporary to show what the advance this year is likely to be over last year. In 1917, for instance, the Army in Egypt produced 196,000 tons of hay, but it is estimated that this year it will produce 424,000 tons. Last year 26,000 tons of barley were grown; this year, 96,000 tons. We cannot get figures to show what amount of food is likely to be raised in the military gardens in England this year, but it promises to be enormous. At Aldershot, instead of the 28 acres cultivated last year, 1200 acres will be under cultivation this spring.

Very little difficulty has been experienced in getting the work done. In our citizen army there are men of all callings, and gardening in all its branches is well represented. As aids to them, labour battalions, non-combatant battalions and even German prisoners have been employed; arrangements have been made for supplying them with implements and seeds, the hiring of tractors and other purposes connected with the farms. The produce is sold at wholesale rates to the Army and Navy Canteen Board, which is responsible for the feeding of the Forces, and the net result will be that our soldiers will be able to enjoy vegetables of their own growing. Money advances will be repaid out of the prices realised, and the profits remaining will be given to the regimental funds.

It will be seen from this short survey that the movement is one of great importance in the direction of increased productivity. A great portion of the 7,000 odd acres that are being cultivated by the Army in England is made up of very inferior pasture, and much of it will be brought to a state of high fertility owing to the facilities which are afforded for procuring manure from the various horse camps.

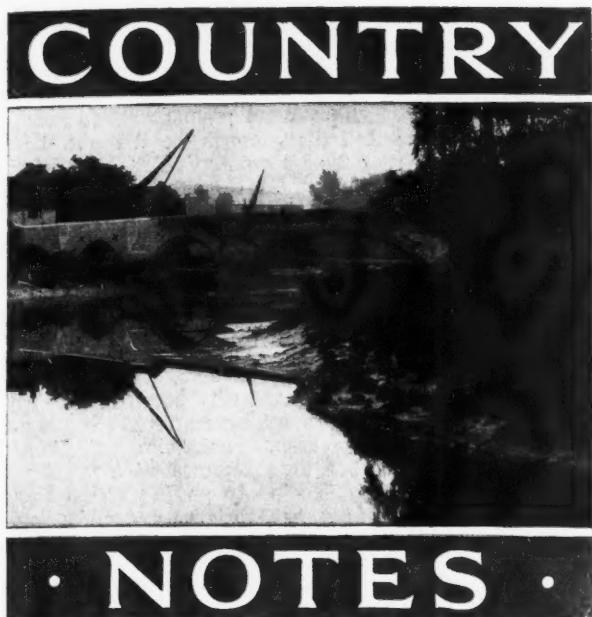
But almost as important as anything is the relief that will be afforded to localities in regard to the food supply. The Army is a very good neighbour in one way—it is an excellent customer and pays well and promptly for what it buys, but when food is scarce this is hardly an adequate compensation; those who sell may profit, but the consumer recognises that a strong competitor has come into the field, and supplies available for general consumption are diminished in proportion to the quantity needed for the Army. In other words, the more food produced in military gardens the more will be available for the ordinary householder.

We are glad to learn that at some camps livestock of one kind and another is being kept, such, for example, as poultry, rabbits, pigs and goats. Eggs which, in the middle of the laying season, are sold at 4s. a dozen are beyond the means of the private soldier, and bacon at present is as scarce in the Army as elsewhere; but every messroom has its waste, and if this is preserved and utilised the effect ought to be in every way excellent.

Our Frontispiece

THE portrait reproduced as frontispiece to this issue is of the Countess Cadogan. Married to the sixth Earl Cadogan in 1911, Lady Cadogan is a daughter of Mr. George Stewart Coxon, and has a little son, Viscount Chelsea, and one daughter.

* * * It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper.



• NOTES •

FROM an article published on another page it will be seen that Lord Aldenham and the Hon. Vicary Gibbs are offering to the British public a splendid object-lesson in regard to the production of home-grown vegetable food. One of the most regrettable features of the past thirty or forty years is the passing of this supply into the hands of foreigners. Before the war we had come to depend almost exclusively on imports for early vegetables and similar produce. It seemed as if the British cultivator, with huge markets at his elbow in the shape of towns like London, Birmingham, Glasgow, Manchester, Liverpool, and so on, had given up the attempt to compete with those who had to transport their goods to this country by rail and sea passage. This had come to be regarded as the natural order of things. The work done at Aldenham shows that it never could have been inevitable. Our climate does not in itself favour early growth, but there are ways and means to overcome the difficulty. These are in themselves simple enough for the humblest grower to operate, and yet so far-embracing that they can be made use of by those who are able to command an area of 100 acres or so for the purpose. At first glance, no doubt, many people will say that the result is achieved by a lavish outlay of capital. But the experience of every successful market gardener shows that this is not so. If he be a self-made man the probability is that he started with a single glasshouse, perhaps a frame or a cold greenhouse, but found the return so large in comparison with the outlay that he added glass to glass until acres were covered. But at Aldenham the production does not depend wholly upon heat and protection. Comparatively speaking, a small amount of glass will suffice if the object is not to produce vegetables out of season, but only a little earlier than could be obtained by outdoor cultivation.

IT has been demonstrated at Aldenham that there is practically nothing which cannot be obtained as early in the season as is really desirable by a skilful use of glass. To meet the requirements of those able to pay for luxuries early potatoes can be brought forward in pots; so can early peas and other delicacies of the same kind; but the main feature is that the seed is sown in protection and brought forward until ready for transplanting to the open. In this way there is economy in every possible direction. Time is gained because of the excellent start obtained by the seedlings. When these are removed to the open they occupy the ground for a much shorter period than would otherwise be the case, and hence leave it open for the growing of another and entirely different crop. Thus the earth is made to give, instead of one return, two, or even three, in the course of the twelve months. Further, an adroit and yet a perfectly simple arrangement can be made whereby one crop shelters another, or is sheltered by it; that is one of the great advantages of intercropping. Even those readers who are possessed of little or no capital may be recommended to study in close detail the processes employed. This will enable all to see that whatever the means at their disposal may be, they can, without much expenditure of money, but merely by intelli-

gence and painstaking care, achieve a very great success in early production and in obtaining a maximum result from the soil.

IT was impossible in the course of an article to do as much as mention every object of interest connected with vegetable growing at Aldenham, and there is one point in particular which should be noted by those who read the article. It is that preparations have been made for rearing a considerable number of pigs in connection with the great vegetable garden. This ought to prove a most economical venture. In market gardening there are too many products treated as waste which could be utilised for the public benefit. In every crop of potatoes, for instance, there is a proportion of small tubers which, except in cases of dire necessity, are not regarded as suitable for the table, but can be easily boiled and given to pigs. This applies to other crops as well. The cabbage leaves, otherwise useless, thinnings from various crops, stems and roots are thrown away by the careless gardener and placed in a rubbish heap or allowed to rot into humus by those who try to make a little more of their opportunities; but they can all be turned into bacon at great profit. Again, Aldenham is famous for its woods, and during the autumn there is a wealth of acorns and beech mast on which pigs have been fattened since the day of Gurth the swineherd. These advantages do not belong to one estate in particular. They are possessed in a lesser degree by every cultivator of an allotment and every dweller by an English roadside where oak and beech figure among the hedgerow trees.

THE DREAMER.

One called him, from the path that all men trod,
" Give me to drink of yonder earthly stream ! "
He schooled to service the young wings of dream
That ached for flight toward the hills of God.

But idlers thronged the passage to the brook ;
Plucking the seamless robe of his desire,
A cripple prayed him, " Kindle me a fire ! "
A dying face compelled him with a look.

Night fell upon his hope. " God, God," he cried,
" I had a dream, but I have let day go
For one who thirsted, one who did not know
That his fire put out mine, and one who died."

Upon the midnight came a timeless gleam :
" For thirst and cold, for death and all dumb pleas
You let it go ?—O dreamer !—but for these,
Where were the pigments that could limn your dream ? "

V. H. FRIEDLAENDER.

A GREAT deal of correspondence, private and otherwise, has come to this office in regard to the articles on ensilage contributed by Mr. Amos. No one questions his thorough and practical grasp of the subject; but the opinion is freely expressed that a silo in concrete is preferable to one of wood, at any rate at the present time. The first and the most important consideration is that while the wood is difficult to obtain at present—we had almost written impossible—the construction of concrete silos can be managed with comparative ease. One correspondent, indeed, describes a brick silo which seems to have answered the purpose very well. Another question is that of cost. Mr. Amos quotes £350 as the price of construction; this would apply to a wooden erection, but not to a concrete one, which could probably be put up for about half that price. We understand that the Board of Agriculture is taking the matter in hand seriously and is preparing a standard plan for the use of farmers. If this is so it is very good news. No one can dispute the advantage, even the necessity, of producing ensilage for winter food in face of the difficulty experienced in obtaining concentrated and artificial foods. The silo has become an essential adjunct to the farmer in the United States and Canada, and it can be no longer neglected by those who are intent on raising and fattening livestock in this country.

WHILE everybody sympathises with Mr. Fisher's ambition to improve the education of the working classes, less interest has been shown than might have been expected in the Bill which he has reintroduced. Enthusiasm for it seems confined to a large extent to newspaper writers, who probably fail to interpret public sentiment, and to the composers

of those extraordinary advertisements by which an endeavour has been made to whip up interest. The common-sense of the nation recognises two facts of great importance to which Mr. Fisher does not seem to have given due weight. One is that the Bill means a great addition to the national expense—at least ten millions a year—and this at a time when the resources of the country are strained to the very utmost. In the second place, the educational theorist does not recognise that the boys and girls in this country have received from the war an education far transcending in value any received from the schools. They have learned to think and act like responsible little men and women. After all, the learning of schools becomes in a large measure dead matter when the problems of life have to be faced, and we may be sure that the young people of to-day have a very much better chance than their parents had to become good and useful citizens. Further, the Bill is but a half measure. It does little towards that consolidation of the classes into one class, which the far-seeing statesman knows to be essential to the preservation of the British Empire.

NOTHING but praise can be accorded to the design of appointing Lord Pirrie to the directorship of shipbuilding. In previous appointments of this kind success in one line of business has been too generally assumed as a guarantee of fitness in another. The absurdity of the principle would be very quickly recognised if it were applied to professional men—for example, if a surgeon of world-wide fame were made director of aircraft production. The Government has made too many attempts to fit a square peg into a round hole, but Lord Pirrie's appointment would not be open to this objection. In early youth he took to shipbuilding as a duck takes to water and the whole of an active and energetic life has been devoted to acquiring a still greater and greater mastery of that craft. He has designed ships, he has organised great mercantile fleets, and is beyond comparison a man most fitted for the work to be done at the present moment.

THE death of Dr. Henry Scott Holland, Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, which took place at Oxford on Sunday last, was not entirely unexpected. After so many years' work in London and such close identification with its social welfare his appointment to Oxford by Mr. Asquith a few years ago came as a great surprise. Though in the last few years ill-health and a sadly denuded University have given little opportunity for Dr. Holland's vigorous personality to have its full effect, he has undoubtedly left a deep impress on his *Alma Mater*. Few men have maintained the fresh exuberance and ideal enthusiasm of youth as did Dr. Holland. A valiant High Churchman and a leading spirit of the Christian Social Union, he threw himself with immense energy into the business of promoting good citizenship, and by the part he took in a number of trade disputes did much to establish friendly relations between the Church and Labour. To the very last his monthly notes in *The Commonwealth* were marked by an ebullition and intensity that almost compelled acquiescence in his uncompromising opinions. As a preacher and speaker he was notable for the amazing torrent of words that poured out at a pace that was the despair of all but a very few reporters. His last book, "A Bundle of Memories," showed him as a brilliant essayist and a rare humorist.

FROM time to time in these pages articles have appeared on the subject of photography from aeroplanes at the front—a branch of the Service almost unknown to the public until its details and its extreme importance were here described. Names, as we have been taught, are seldom mentioned in connection with the doings of the Royal Flying Corps, and few people were aware that the high developments reached in this science of aerial camera reconnaissances were largely due to the labours of Major C. D. M. Campbell, whose death was announced last week. Major Campbell was a sapper subaltern at the outbreak of war. He went out to France in 1914, and early in 1915, on the Aisne, took some of the first really effective flying photographs produced in the British force, and was instrumental in impressing on the authorities the value of this method of spying over the enemy lines. He invented much of the apparatus now in daily use by our aviators in every theatre of the war, arranged with manufacturers to turn out special materials, and started the unique training school, a sketch of whose curriculum was recently given in COUNTRY LIFE. His promotion was rapid; but the tireless eagerness with which he threw himself into his work undermined his none too robust health. After a journey

to the United States, whither he was sent to advise the American flying photographers, he had returned to England and then hurried to an optical conference in Paris. He was about to cross the Atlantic again when the strain of his incessant exertions finally caused a collapse. It may be said of Major Campbell that, though he did not die of wounds, he gave his life for his country. The fine efficiency of the photographic section of the Royal Flying Corps is his memorial.

AFTER much hesitation and no little grumbling farmers seem to have made up their minds that the Food Controller's published prices for the coming potato crop are not only fair but profitable. If Lincolnshire is satisfied, whose opinion is likely to be wiser? In the Holland Division of the county 90 per cent. of the 10,700 acres of the land newly ploughed by order will be planted with potatoes, and, what is much more significant, 3,000 more acres have been ploughed voluntarily for the same crop. Lancashire and Cheshire were very suspicious, but at a representative meeting of farmers last week they decided to go full steam ahead. Cornwall is concentrating on early varieties, and as the county has shown great foresight in securing ample supplies of fertilisers they ought to secure a bumper crop. Everywhere the sowing of oats on new land goes forward vigorously. The anxiety as to shortage of seed has been relieved by the prohibition of export of oats to England from Scotland and Ireland except for seed purposes, and by the ample supplies put at the disposal of farmers by the Food Production Department.

NURSERY SONG.

Daisy, bright daisy
Make your mind aisy,
As long as you blossom
The children will smile.
Daisy, bright daisy
Keep your heart aisy,
We shall be children too,

After awhile.

ANNE F. BROWN.

HOUSING was to the fore last week, when a large conference was held at the Caxton Hall and Mr. Hayes Fisher promised that the Cabinet's programme of aid to local authorities would soon be made public. "Substantial financial assistance" will mean heavy charges on public funds; but they must be faced. It is little realised how the finance of housing has been changed by the war. A local authority building a cottage for £250 and borrowing at 3½ per cent. could let it at 6s. 11d. a week in 1914. A rise of 40 per cent. in cost of construction (it can hardly be less during the first post-war years) and an increase of loan charges to 5 per cent. mean raising the rent from 6s. 11d. to 12s. 10d. Before the war rents were far too high in relation to wages, and the accommodation given was insufficient in quantity and poor in quality. Local authorities would not therefore be able to let good new cottages at economic rents unless wages are more than doubled. Big as the increases have been, it is almost inconceivable that post-war wages can remain permanently at double the pre-war levels except for the agricultural labourer. A vast Government grant is therefore inevitable to cover the inflated cost of building.

FOR some time past a movement has been on foot to induce the Board of Agriculture to take steps for preventing notices being given to tenants for the purpose of sale. This raises many very important questions. In the first place, it is placing the owner of land in a worse position than the owner of any other property. Presumably he has either bought the land or inherited it, and there may be many good and valid reasons for his wish to sell. In many cases the rent charged is much below the value of the land, and the owner with all his other expenses increased is at a loss to live on the income derived from the property. On the other hand, a farmer has been enjoying most of the advantages arising out of the national crisis. Help is afforded him in every conceivable way, and the prices he is receiving are far beyond any contemplated when his bargain was made. It would, therefore, be a very fair way out of the difficulty to give the tenant the first right of purchase at a value of the land determined by independent arbitrators. Failing his accepting the offer, it would surely be unjust not to allow the owner to appeal to the open market. It cannot be denied that his expenses have increased enormously during the war.

VEGETABLE GROWING AT ALDENHAM

THE POSSIBILITIES OF INTENSIVE CULTIVATION

EVERWHERE in Great Britain men are busily employed turning pasture into ploughland, but at Aldenham the spectacle is presented of 100 acres of very old and inferior pasture being transformed into highly productive garden soil. On a small scale this is being done by allotment holders, to whom all honour is due. In their scanty hours of leisure, with the simplest appliances, aided by such manure as they can scrape from the road and by dint of hard and constant labour, they will, out of a patch of common, make a valuable vegetable plot. They do well if they provide for household wants. But the experiment at Aldenham has attained dimensions that give it the highest national importance. Its success, already assured, goes far to prove that never again should this country be dependent on outside sources for a scrap of vegetable produce. It is simultaneously yielding a solid contribution to the national food supply and laying the foundation of a great industry that should go on and prosper when the war permits of a reconstruction of British commerce. The credit for its inception is shared equally by Lord Aldenham, the owner, and his brother, the Hon. Vicary Gibbs, the tenant of the estate. Mr. Edwin Beckett may be regarded as the executant officer. He has long held a leading place in the gardening world, and those who have not his personal acquaintance have had the opportunity of learning about his methods in "Vegetables for Home and Exhibition," one of the few gardening books that are a faithful record of individual practice.

What is intensive cultivation? Mr. Beckett unconsciously answered the question by a casual reference to his grandfather. One knew that he had been brought up at the feet of his father, but it was the grandparent who established the family position. He was a market gardener who owned a few acres of freehold in Oxfordshire, and, said his descendant, grew on one acre as much as another did on ten. What that means may best be shown by a brief survey of the proceedings at Aldenham. Last year it was considered a big effort when forty acres were devoted to vegetable growing. This year the area has been increased to a hundred acres. In the county that would be considered a farm of moderate size. A very typical one well known to the writer is laid out in eight fields of 4, 8, 10, 15, 15, 16, 20 and 30 acres respectively. The area does not correspond exactly, but the number and size of the fields are typical of that style of holding. I draw attention to the feature because modern methods lead to its obliteration. On Saturday last, when I paid a visit to Aldenham, the first steps towards this had already been taken. When asked what sort of land he would like for his vegetables, Mr. Beckett replied: "The worst." He does not believe in the wisdom of cutting up really good pasture, and is a firm believer in the modern plan which, instead of allowing the field to dictate, as happens when it is said a soil will only grow such and such a crop, makes the more masterly assertion that the market needs a certain kind of produce and the land must be made to grow it. The fields ultimately selected were bad

enough, in all conscience—small, divided by rough, overgrown hawthorn hedges set with the usual elms, oaks, ashes and other hedgerow timber, at places approaching the character of a morass. Modern husbandry, with its need for freedom of



Reginald Malby.

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A FINE ONION PLANTATION AT ALDENHAM IN JUNE.

movement, has no need for the little hedged fields, and so the tough old hawthorns were stubbed up and burnt. Tree planting is a duty recognised by every patriotic estate owner, and nowhere more than at Aldenham with its arboricultural fame and tradition, but the trees must stand together in



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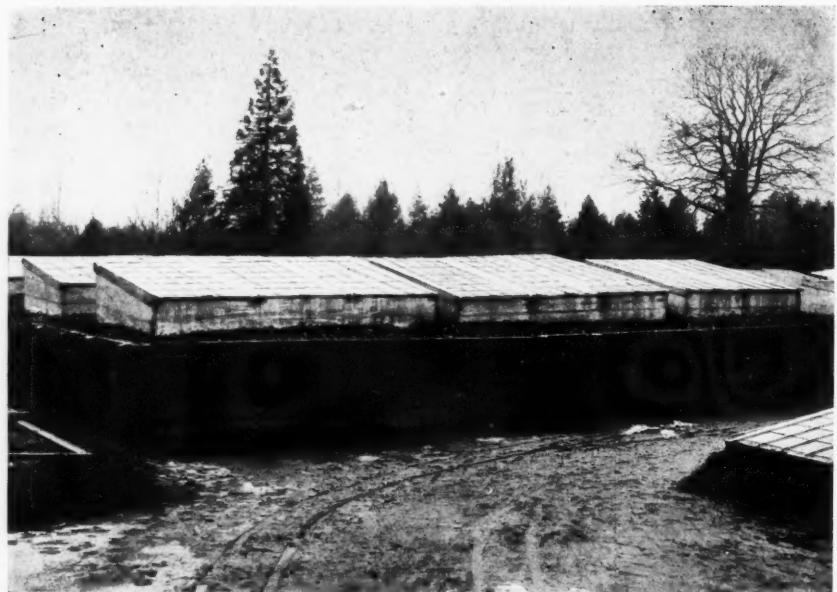
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LAST YEAR'S HARVEST.

orderly, well selected and well considered plantations, not be allowed to spring up when and where they like. Most of the hedgerow timber has already been felled, and, by the time these lines will reach the reader, tractors will have

hauled it to the station.

Drainage was equally imperative. Would the fact were recognised as promptly elsewhere! The soil is well known to the British farmer—6ins. of dark mould resting on a heavy, cold clay, land on which growth starts slowly, although it is responsive to good cultivation. In the prosperous seventies of last century, land-owners and farmers, working in a kind of partnership, did a lot of useful draining, but neglect characterised the years of the great depression. Now, however, there is no excuse for it. A thorough system

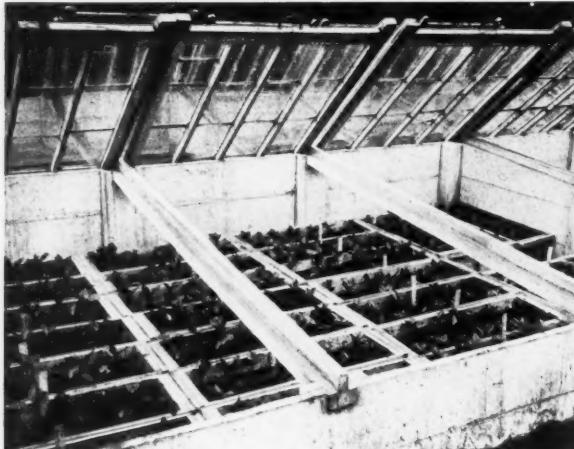


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AN UP-TO-DATE HOTBED.

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intensive culture. The much used phrase may be paraphrased as the art of extracting a maximum of foodstuffs



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BROAD BEANS IN BOXES FOR EARLY CROPS.



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CAULIFLOWERS IN POTS FOR EARLY FORCING.

of pipe drainage such as these fields require is expensive, but it brings an immediate return. Land which undrained produced a rental of 25s. an acre is by drainage immediately increased in value to anything from 30s. to 40s. per acre. In some fields surface draining will do all that is required, and the system has been applied where suitable; but it is not sufficient when the fall is not pronounced.

When this preliminary work is done the land is ready for ploughing. This will be done by teams hired out by the Board of Agriculture. Mr. Beckett is a firm believer in the virtue of deep cultivation, and his system of

from the earth. Not in one, but in many ways is this accomplished. Let us take three of them which all hang together, viz., management of crops, fertilisation of the soil, and economic use of space. By the first I mean the art of getting more crops than one in the course of the year. Plants must be matured early and in the briefest possible period. The art of succeeding in market gardening is to get produce ready a day or a week in front of your neighbour—surely a most important art at this particular period when the grower is racing against time, so that this year's produce may be ready before that of last year.



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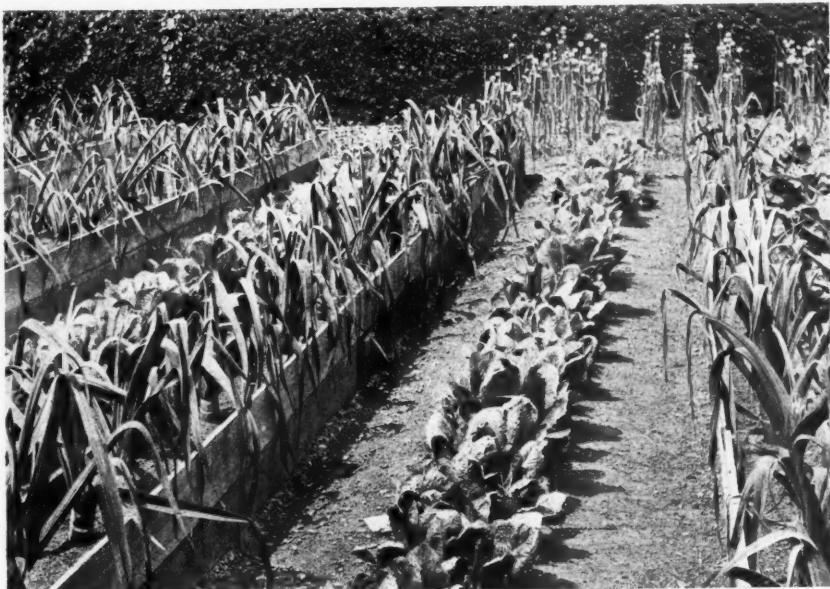
SCOTCH KALE, PLANTED ON PASTURE BROKEN IN FEBRUARY, 1917.



PLANTING LETTUCES BETWEEN CELERY AND RUNNER BEANS.



CELERY BETWEEN ASPARAGUS BEDS.



LEEKES AND LETTUCES.

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is exhausted. To achieve this end the gardener must make liberal use of glass. Of the forms employed, the least important (to give a personal opinion) is the hothouse. In normal times its use is mainly to produce in the shape of luxuries vegetables out of season. But this serves only a limited and selected purpose. You could not imagine a nation dependent for its food on the output of hothouses. Far more useful are the homely greenhouse and cold frame. By their aid vast supplies of vegetables can be got ready for consumption several weeks in front of the ordinary outdoor crops. Never have I seen frames employed to more purpose than at Aldenham. One could dwell on their number and size, but that would only give colour to the reproach of all things being possible to capital. On this point it is necessary to be very clear. Aldenham, before the war renowned for its propagation of delicate shrubs and forwarding of flowers, is magnificently equipped with glass and its adjuncts. Yet nothing important is done that cannot be imitated by the humblest grower. For example, the mild, constant heat required is produced by dead leaves collected during the preceding autumn.

This is not a haphazard proceeding, but a methodically carried out plan. A large wooden enclosure has been built for the reception of leaves, which, of course, are very plentiful on this well wooded estate. They are carted in during the autumn months, and soon begin to rot and produce the moderate heat required for the cold frames. About half of the contents of the enclosure are taken out annually and spread on the land, so that there is always available the warmth from the new leaves. On these are placed a considerable number of larger sized frames, in which the work of propagation is done for the spring planting. On Saturday they were full of clean, beautiful plants in various stages of growth. What struck one most, perhaps, was the advanced stage of the cauliflowers. Some are such large, well grown plants that it will be possible to cut from them early in May. Others are in different degrees of forwardness, so that after the first cutting a regular supply will be ensured. These early cauliflowers sell at a price from od. to 1s. each, and are highly prized. This year they will come in very handy indeed, as anyone who can have a good cauliflower on his table is independent of anything else. Now, it might not be practicable for the small grower to be quite so early. The first lot are grown wholly under glass, but the others are not really far behind, and it requires comparatively little trouble to prepare a supply available in June and July—the months in which it is expected that the scarcity of wheaten flour will be at its greatest.

The collection of leaves has frequently been urged upon every gardener, and it could be done on a greater or lesser scale according to the locality. There are times in late October and November when the high-road is littered with leaves that in the ordinary course of things would be cleared away by the roadmen and

made to serve no useful purpose. They could be gathered and used, not only for producing heat in a frame or frames, but also for the purpose of forcing rhubarb, seakale and other simple and useful subjects. A secret of intensive cultivation is to be found in the ability to take full advantage of the material thrown in one's way.

At Aldenham, needless to say, the cauliflowers form only a very small proportion of the plants prepared for early cropping. The peas and beans are dealt with most successfully. The broad beans at the present moment are fine, sturdy plants, which will probably be set out in the open early in April with a great start in front of those which have been sown in the usual way and will probably be doing no more than appearing above ground. Peas are cultivated on a much more extensive scale. One had an opportunity of seeing them, too, in every stage—fine seedlings just peeping out of the earth, some advancing in pots, and others already placed in their permanent positions. But here again was evidence of the infinite capacity for taking pains, which is the first essential of a good gardener as well as of a great genius. The more advanced were transplanted, and at the same time set with pea-sticks, over which nets had been flung. In this a double purpose is served—the tender nurslings are protected from the cold winds and also from the ravages of birds, which attack the first exposed greenery of the year with great vigour. There were other rows in which a different kind of protection was used. A little fence, 18ins. or 2ft. high, is made of spruce branches, forming a thick barricade against the colder winds, and so arranged that it can be drawn over the plants for complete protection in case of frost or very stormy weather. These long rows of early peas must also prove of the highest service at what promises to be the most critical period of the food year. Another very important plant in the frames is the onion. It would not be possible to give even a rough estimate of the vast numbers that are being brought forward in small bags and made ready for transplanting. Ultimately they will cover five or six acres of ground. One does not envy the woman the tedious task of going on, day after day, putting these little things in the ground, but the result will be to provide a vast store of one of the most popular and useful foods. Other frames were devoted to various members of the cabbage tribe, to beets and other garden plants, all of which will be well advanced at the time the ordinary gardener is still busy sowing the seeds.

Economy of space is one of the essentials of intensive cultivation. It should never take the form of crowding plants together, as the best experience has shown that the yield of a plant with free exposure to the sun and atmosphere is always greater than that of two or three crowded and necessarily dwarfed plants. But the great liberality of room allowed between the rows often enables a catch crop of some early growing stuff to be taken while the more important and more slowly maturing one is still in its early stages. A few examples of intercropping are shown in our illustrations, and many more could be adduced. Lettuces can be grown beautifully between rows of leeks, and are consumed before the latter have attained to any great size. A hundred instances might be given, but, unfortunately, space has not been left to dwell upon them. Those who know Mr. Beckett's book will need no telling about this form of intensive cultivation. Another economy of space is to be found in the following of one crop by another. The ground occupied by early cauliflowers, early peas, early potatoes, early beans and so on can advantageously be replanted with something else, to the great profit of the market gardener. P. A. G.

AGRICULTURAL TOPICS OF THE HOUR

THE ELECTRIFICATION OF SEEDS.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Allow me to endorse very heartily your assertion that it takes a long time and many partial failures to bring a new method to perfection. The method of electrifying seeds has taken a long time—six years—to bring to its present stage, and in the course of the experimentation there have been, no doubt, partial failures; but may I point out that the expression you rightly attribute to me—"the method is scarcely yet past the experimental stage"—was used by me for the electrification of *growing crops*, not for the electrification of *seeds before sowing*. Your dictum, "so far the results have not been satisfactory commercially," may be true of the former process; it is no longer true of the latter. I have before me the reports of practical farmers, of seed merchants and seed experts, and of at least one miller, and these reports, taken together, show that the method has reached the stage of commercial success. I agree that it is important not to encourage false hopes, but you, Sir, will agree that it is important not to delay, at this critical season of the year, the adoption of a method that is calculated to increase materially the harvest

of 1918. The hasty adoption, from excessive optimism, of new methods is to be deprecated; but is not delay, arising from timidity or want of knowledge, also to be deprecated? I have no axe to grind in this matter; my only interests in it are the interest of a scientific man in a scientific process, and the interest of an Englishman in the welfare of his country. I do not ask you to accept my word, but I do entreat you to investigate the matter for yourself and to place the result of your enquiry before your readers. I pledge whatever reputation I have that the electrification of *seeds* is worth enquiring into.—CHAS. MERCIER.

THE STACK SILO.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Where cows are kept silage is a specially valuable food. As for the making, it is better to cart the grass freshly cut; no rain in which the men will consent to work need stop you, and a silage stack is best built continuously. There should be plenty of strength on the stack and the men must keep continuously laying the grass round the edges and tramping round them; the middle will always fill up, but the edges *must* be built quite sheer and tramped solid. Ordinary farm carts with ladders are quickest to cart with, because the grass weighs three times as much as hay, and if very wet a great deal more. A most important point is the temperature. If the stack is built and weighted so quickly as not to get up a good body of heat, it will make "sour silage." This is of a pale, yellowish green and preserves the colour of clover and other flowers. On being exposed to the air, when cut out, it at once takes up carbonic acid gas, and for that or some other reason (I am ignorant of science) it gives off a most penetrating and unpleasant odour—so much so as to be sometimes intolerable. But if the stack is allowed to gather heat, which it readily does if not built too quickly, the silage becomes of a darker colour, and its smell when cut out is sweet and not at all unpleasant. To ensure this the heat must go up to at least 120deg. Fahr., but it should not much exceed 160deg. or it will become very dark in colour and sickly in smell. Over 180deg. it will become almost black, and much above this heat it will become tindery and worthless; but I believe a silage stack cannot "fire." I used to have a stack thermometer (made by Messrs. Vipan and Headly), but an ordinary iron rod will serve. This should, when inserted in the stack, become almost too hot to hold—this will ensure the silage being sweet and the stack can then be weighted. I never built a haystack on a silage stack—obviously an impossible thing to do if you are making aftermath into silage instead of hay. The Johnson ensilage stack press, with ratchets and wires, is very useful if you propose building a stack in the same place regularly, but it requires a good deal of fixing and is not at all necessary. A silage stack can be very simply weighted with earth, putting thorns, heads outwards, at the edges to prevent the earth slipping, and then covering with, say, 16ins. of earth at the edges, running out to 4ins. or 5ins. on the top of the centre of the stack, which should be finished with enough camber to shoot the rain. A fairly wide, shallow trench dug all round the stack will provide most of the earth wanted and help to keep the bottom of the stack dry. There is, of course, much more waste to the outside of a silage stack than to a well-pulled haystack (you must not pull a silage stack for fear of letting too much air in), but it is only a few inches, if care is taken in building to keep the edges of the stack well trodden and sheer upright. Sweet ensilage so made is capital food, especially for milch cows, and is far preferable to damaged hay for them. As Mr. Pilliner says, silage fed to cows will not cause the milk to taste, but this word of caution should be added: that if a pail of milk be left standing in the cowshed where silage is being fed, the milk will probably take up the smell and be disagreeable. For many years I fed fifty cows on silage, sending the milk to local retailers, and never had a complaint.—UVEDALE LAMBERT.

LAND DEVELOPMENT IN CANADA.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It is most interesting to know that the owners of large estates in the British Isles are breaking them up and planting them with food crops. For years past I have advised my clients here and in Canada that the first thing to do in the development of a country estate is to put the land down into food crops, advocating a seven-year rotation. After land has been subjected to several of these rotations, should it then be the desire of the owner to have extensive lawns or parks, he will be able to secure either in a most satisfactory degree, as his land will have been put in splendid condition to produce such development. As a rule, almost all of the estates which are put under food cultivation have remained in such field crops, with a very small proportion in lawns, parks or ornamental gardens. On my own property, just out of New York City, where land has attained a value of several thousand dollars per acre, I each year have put more and more land into field crops, orchards, etc., and am now completing the second seven-year rotation for the large part of the property. The results are most satisfactory, the fruit being almost as perfect in appearance as that produced on the Pacific Coast, with much finer flavour. Corn (maize) is raised at the rate of 200 bushels to the acre, and other produce in the same proportion. When in England before the war, it seemed to me that the farming sections which you have and which were most beautifully and thoroughly cultivated, offered the greatest attraction, and I prophesy that the lands which now are coming under the plough will not revert to other purposes for many years to come. Miss Coates' article on the use of liquid manure, and the editorial in your issue of January 12th are most valuable. It should be borne in mind that, although any size can be built, silos should not be constructed for profit where there are less than eight or ten cows. These silos can be built of any available material; hollow tile or terra-cotta block are, perhaps, the most practicable, as the air space thus afforded helps to keep the ensilage in good condition. Wood, concrete or masonry silos are perfectly feasible, however. Now that labour is so scarce it will be well for those having large silos to prepare to fill them by the use of blowers, which can be easily rigged up in connection with a tractor or other portable engine existing on the farm. And now is the time to prepare for next summer's crop. The filling of a silo with the use of a blower is a very easy task, and the ensilage is laid in much more successfully than if placed by hand.—CHARLES W. LEAVITT, New York.

HORSES IN THE WAR.—II

THEIR WELFARE ON ACTIVE SERVICE



INSPECTING A CHARGER SQUADRON.

EVERYONE in the Army has been learning and acquiring knowledge during the war. Brains, when they were given a chance, have had wonderful opportunities for activity; and even when suppressed by the sheer complexity and weight of official routine they have invariably triumphed. It is true of the Chiefs of strategy, tactics, administration and supply and of everyone in a descending grade. Most certainly it is true of those who have had to do with horses and mules in the war, which are the special theme of the writer of these articles. Experience has been the teacher, as it always has been, whether in success or failure. Everyone must inevitably have profited by his mistakes, just as he must have been encouraged and spurred on to greater things by his successes. One sees this so definitely where the horses are concerned. There is an infinitely better understanding in 1918 between man and his dumb and uncomplaining beast of burden in France than there was in 1914 and later than that. Those who have had charge of him in health have learned better how to maintain him in health against the unnatural rigours of hardship and exposure and those other menaces imposed by modern warfare in country constantly harassed and torn by shell-fire and bomb. And it is equally certain that immense strides have been made by that splendid

Army Veterinary Service in coaxing back to health the debilitated and the exhausted, those gashed and wounded by bullet and shell splinters, and in combating disease generally.

There can be no fair comparison between 1914 and 1918. For one thing, numbers have vastly increased; so much so, indeed, that since the first of our war horses stepped ashore in France something like a total of three quarters of a million animals must have passed through France. That is a stupendous figure. Then, while the "first hundred thousand" had to be dumped "anywhere"—literally anywhere—in the region of the long line of battle, others that followed have had the better conditions resulting from valiant efforts to improve stabling and shelters. Time and experience have come to the rescue, just as one would have expected them to do. But a factor of which too much cannot be made has been the very real concern of the Field-

Marshal Commanding-in-Chief (Sir Douglas Haig).

His influence has been great and has penetrated from the vast users of animals—the heavy and field artillery—to the smallest unit employing horses or mules. He is known to be a sincere lover of the horse, and I am perfectly sure that the Quarter master-General of the Forces (who is primarily responsible for the feeding of our war horses), the Director of Remounts at the War Office (who



PROPER AND SUFFICIENT WATERING OF ANIMALS IS OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE.

is responsible for meeting the demands of the armies in France and all the theatres of war), and the Director of the Veterinary Service in France will bear eloquent testimony to the incalculable good which is the outcome of the "Chief's" personal interest.

That is why I say there can be no fair comparison between then and now. I will go further and congratulate myself that I am

writing in 1918, and not twelve months ago; for one must have been depressed at that time by the heavy wastage caused by the extraordinarily hard winter of 1916 and 1917. First, there were weeks on end of rain, then weeks of rigorous cold and icy winds, and then rain again with the thaw. The greatest care could not overcome the evils that followed on those dreadful conditions. Flanders and the Somme country are appalling areas in such circumstances. The mud was awful and literally engulfed horses. There were parts where wheeled traffic could not go, and yet supplies had to be got to their objectives and the guns moved as directed. So loads had to be carried as packs, and, in this way weighed down, our war horses and mules were pulled to pieces. Added to this was a serious curtailment of the oat ration, which could not possibly have been avoided, since it was due to a circumstance beyond the control of our splendid organisers of supply. Thus it was that the combined result of operations in mud and short rations was to cause a wastage which, happily, belongs to the past, and will, we hope, never occur again. In one month the losses rose to 5 per cent., which is little under half the wastage of the whole of the previous year. Matters speedily improved when the better weather came and the full ration was restored, and animals were wonderful in the vast improvement they showed. Most probably the loss of their proper food was more harmful than the frightful weather.

It was about this time that the Commander-in-Chief showed his watchfulness and zeal for the welfare of his horses; and one outcome, which I feel sure has had most excellent results, was



READY TO START FROM A BASE REMOUNT FOR THE FRONT.
Units send men to bring the animals allotted to them.

the appointment to each corps of a chief horse-master, who had under him subordinate horse-masters, each attached to minor units. They were ostensibly what their designation implies—experts in horse and stable management; and it has been their duty ever since to watch those units employing horses and to give useful advice for the improvement of the necessarily hard lot of

horses and mules on active service close behind the Line. Really efficient and tactful horse-masters have, I am sure, done good, though the splendid condition of the animals in France to-day has been primarily due to the better and milder winter. Then, the Director of the Veterinary Service in France has abundantly aided the good work by instituting at each of his hospitals a ten-day course of lectures and instruction for artillery and infantry transport officers. In this way 50 officers and 300 N.C.O.s have taken the course each month.

There was a time in the early days of the war when the horse knowledge of such officers was more imaginary than real. For instance, during the visit I was privileged to pay recently to a certain army area in a particularly bad part of the Line for horses an able and genial Assistant Director of the Veterinary Service told me a true story which amply illustrates with a saving grace of humour the square peg in the round hole. In the course of his visits a young infantry transport officer—such an officer may have about forty animals in his care—complained of the poor quality of the oats. "What's the matter with the oats?" enquired the A.D.V.S. "Well, Sir," was the reply, "they are so small; they get into the horses' teeth." "Ah, well, that's bad, very bad. Perhaps you'd better indent on 'Dados' [a person who is known officially as the Deputy Assistant Director of Ordnance Supply] for some toothpicks!" Of course, the zealous transport officer meant well. But the best part of the story is that a day or two later the boy was ordered to replace a casualty in the line, and the first time he



REMOUNTS ON THE MARCH TO THE FRONT.
Note the feeds carried in nosebags slung round the neck

went over the top he won the Military Cross. Clearly it was a case of a square peg having been in the round hole.

Then, again, this same A.D.V.S. was giving instruction to a class of officers who were concerned with horses in the field, and one enterprising member of the class volunteered the information that he thought he knew all there was to know. He had, for instance, carefully read Horace Hayes' "Notes on Horse Management" and Fitzwygram's well known book on "Horses and Stables." "Then," observed the A.D.V.S., "I suppose you can tell me how many bones there are in a horse's foot." "There are three," promptly came the reply. The interrogator was naturally rather startled, and he had to investigate deeper and enquire the identity of the three. Our gallant officer obliged at once. "They are," he said, "ringbone, sidebone and navicular!" He was not discharged the class that day.

I mention these quite true stories, not in an unpleasant way, but in order to show that all associated with horses in health and sickness must constantly be learning and improving their usefulness to the betterment of the animals themselves, and that the wisest may still go on learning.

It will, I think, be interesting at this stage to outline the procedure by which remounts are sent from the base depots to the front. Remounts are those horses and mules which repair the day-to-day wastage, and so maintain the armies, where animals are concerned, at their allotted strength. In a previous article it was pointed out how, since the war began, over a quarter of a million remounts had been received in France from the beginning of the war to the end of January last. Those figures convey in the best possible way the vast extent of this important branch of the Service. It is, of course, a part of the enormous Department of Supply in the charge of the Quartermaster-General of the Forces. In France there is a Remount Directorate, at the head of which is Brigadier-General Sir F. S. Garratt, C.B., K.C.M.G., and its marked efficiency in every respect is shown by the able way animals have unfailingly been supplied to all those combatant and non-combatant units which have to make use of them in the proper prosecution of the war. With each army there is a Deputy Director of Remounts, and he is "indented on"—the word is a military one, and it is therefore the proper one to use—by every brigade, division and corps in his particular army area. The demands are tabulated, and after authentication he applies to the Directorate at their headquarters for so many heavy draught horses, light draught horses and mules, chargers, riders other than chargers, and pack animals. According to the proximity of the Army and the whereabouts of the nearest base remount dépôt the orders are given. Thus an army holding the northern part of the line would naturally be supplied by a dépôt or dépôts situated nearest to it.

At one time it was the rule to have horses so ordered despatched by special train, each in charge of a conducting officer, who would be responsible for proper watering and feeding *en route* and the safe delivery of them to the Deputy Director at railhead. This procedure in certain cases is followed still, but whenever possible the animals are now marched by road and by stages to their destination. The advantages are distinct. Rolling stock on the railways is thereby spared for other urgent needs, while the steady march is good for the animals themselves. It is good for them physically, for when they arrive they must be better rather than worse for the road work they have done. And, moreover, the units to receive them make acquaintance with them at the base, since a special party is detailed to proceed from their positions at the front to bring them up.

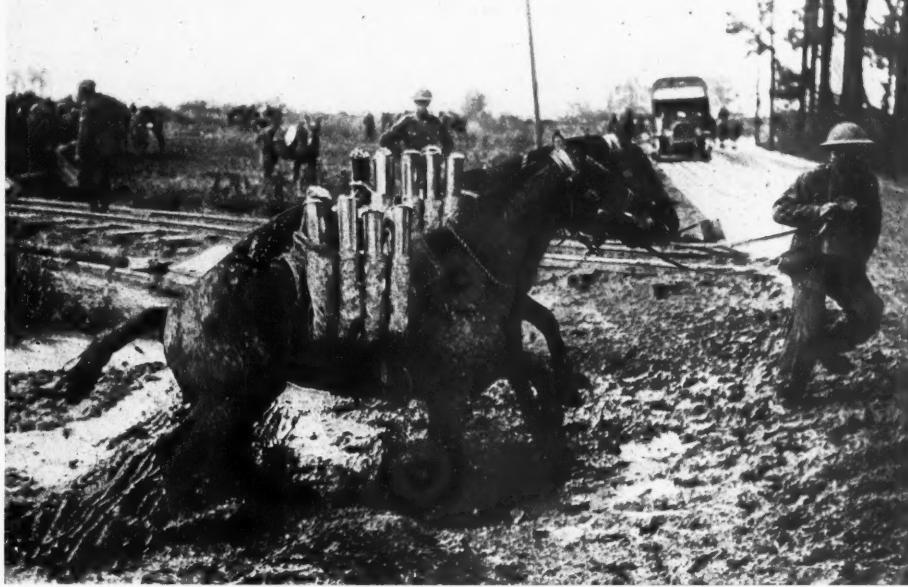
It follows, of course, that they have been passed fit for their ordeal. The Commanding Officer of the dépôt has done his part conscientiously and with strict regard to what will be required of them. My experience goes to show that there is perhaps greater strictness shown in France than in the United Kingdom. It is quite right that the supervision in this way should touch the highest possible standard, since it would be grossly unfair

and wrong to a degree to send indifferent animals to those who are fighting in the death zone and who must at times rely on the activity and strength of their horses for their own personal safety. So, also, it is with the veterinary officers. A heavy responsibility lies with them, for to allow anything but the absolutely fit in health to proceed to the front must be to choke the sick lines with units and the advanced mobile veterinary sections. Besides, neglect in this respect does not give the horse a chance. But I am happy to say, as the result of close observation, that every officer in France in the Remount and Veterinary Services is keenly sensible of this point, and that he never consciously allows an animal to go to the front either too soon or too late.

On all the roads that lead to the line there are staging camps where men and horses are rested for the night. The journey may be of two or three days; usually only two days. Good water is handy, and

our wonderful Q.M.G.'s Department has ensured rations being in readiness. They never fail to be there. And so they progress to the last receiving place, where they are seen by the Deputy Director of Remounts attached to the Army Headquarters concerned, and forthwith distributed throughout the area. Their life, doings and welfare can best be told in another article. We are within sound of the

A. SIDNEY GALTREY.



CARRYING AMMUNITION THROUGH THE MUD.

No wheeled traffic could get through and loads must be carried as packs.

guns now, and the continuation of the story will, I think, fascinate the reader just as it did the writer in the gathering of its details.

AN OLD STORY.

Asleep on a haycock, bemused with four-ale,
Lay honest Job Jenkins one evening, in hail
Of Wansford in England, heigho !

In a fair open mead on the brink of the Nene,
With the song of the thrush and the scent of the bean,
By Wansford in England, heigho !

Now calm floweth Nene with a stream still and slow
But swift from the uplands in flood can she flow
By Wansford in England, heigho !

And fast can she rise, as she rose on the day
When Job on his haycock was carried away
By Wansford in England, heigho !

For, when he awoke, there was water all round,
And the haycock beneath him, and no solid ground
Of Wansford in England, heigho !

He thought he was out on the fathomless sea,
And oh ! in a great puckatary was he
By Wansford in England, heigho !

And someone espied him a-floating along
And cried out : "Hullo, mate ! where do you belong ?"
From Wansford in England, heigho !

Then Job thought he'd sighted some barbarous land,
And cried with the best cry that he could command :
"To Wansford in England, heigho !"

And that's why in fenland it's proper to say,
When people are none too sure of their way,
"They're from Wansford in England, heigho !"

W. J. FERRAR.



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IN THE WOODS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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IN THE WOODS.

"COUNTRY LIFE,"

hollows, giving no outlook; and as more land had been acquired and the carriage road to the house would be nearly a mile in length, a new road could be carried on higher ground, and pleasant views gained at many points. The planning of this road and of another was a matter of much care and thought; there must be an easy gradient and good views, and on the carriage road to the house no internal gates.

The level garden next to the house on its western side is kept in its simple form, and has paths paved with flag-stones, the better to have dry and easy access to the flowers and plants in all seasons. The beds have a slightly raised stone edging. Those in the middle of the space are mostly filled with roses of the tea and China classes, so good for long blooming, and these have an underplanting of pinks, carnations, forget-me-nots, tufted pansies and a few other kinds of plants, including some annuals. The rose beds never have the winter coating of manure so often seen; it is offensive near the house and not needed for such roses if the beds are well prepared. The flower beds have

growths from near the root will be known to be the rose itself and not "robbers." It is found that cuttings of stout half-ripened wood make good plants in one year, but care should be taken to pinch off any flowers within the first year. Trials through many years have shown that such roses do not need the clayish loam that is usually given them, and that they do even better in the more friable soil. Some roses, like Marquise de Sinety, gouty and dwarf on the wild briar, become tall and graceful roses on their own roots. The usual plan of having a rose garden as a place apart probably came from the short blooming season of the H.P. roses, but now that we have these long blooming kinds they come into their true place in the general garden among the flowers of early and late summer and even bloom right into the late autumn.

In close connection with the beds that are chiefly of roses in the west garden there are borders and banks of the best hardy flowers. None of the carpet bedding, such as disfigures some of the public gardens in Paris, London, and



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DAFFODILS BY THE LAKE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

pretty edgings, many of them dwarf and silvery, of such plants as the silvery rock stitchwort (*Gypsophila*) and the silvery rockfoils and dwarf lavender. For some years the best and brightest of the border carnations were given beds to themselves in a smaller section of the garden on a lower level; but, though beautiful in colour, they were disappointing from their short season of bloom. It was found better to grow the so-called "perpetual" kinds in the greenhouse, to put them out in May, and so have them in bloom throughout the summer and autumn. Seedlings of good strains are now also put among the roses; many fine things appear among these, and any that prove worthless are easily removed.

Thousands of tea and China roses were bought grafted on the briar in the usual nursery way; it was found that some beautiful kinds refused to do well on this stock, the stocks themselves throwing up strong suckers, so giving endless trouble in these days of restricted labour. It is far better to have these roses on their own roots when their vigorous life will be much lengthened and any strong

other places, is to be seen here; the borders are homes for all the most beautiful of the hardy perennial plants, and with these a proportion of something like three-quarters of the space is more or less permanently planted. The old bedding system that demanded that the ground should be dug up and planted afresh twice a year gave no opportunity for the display of the finest border plants, some of which do not show their true character till they have been several years established. The remaining fourth of the space is filled with the best of the tender summer flowers, such as heliotrope, with some of the choicer annuals. The advantage of such a way of planting is that the garden is attractive all through the year, for besides the enjoyment of the summer season of fruition there is much work of importance that must be done in the late autumn and winter.

As in many other gardens, the uncertain behaviour of clematis has been a source of trouble at Gravetye, where many of the species and varieties of these charming plants, and notably the kinds that are native of China and Japan, have been largely planted in all kinds of positions and under

many conditions; from positions in rough hedge-rows to the choicest garden spaces. All who have grown large bloomed kinds of clematis know only too well how the plant apparently makes good growth and then dies off, almost within a day. It is more than probable that the cause may be found in the usual nursery practice of grafting on the hardy, free-growing wild plant of our chalk hills, the object being to secure the readiest and most rapid means of producing plants for sale, perhaps without much consideration for their further welfare. In justice to the nurseries it should be remembered that the slower way of producing by layers or otherwise would entail an increased cost in price such as the public would be unwilling to pay. But without any detailed knowledge of vegetable physiology it is



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IN THE HEATH GARDEN.

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easy to conjecture that, with a finer kind grafted upon a coarser, the circulation of the sap of the harder plant may be earlier or more vigorous, or in some way neither identical nor easily assimilated with that of the tenderest scion. In any case, it is obviously safer to have the plant on its own root, whether this is secured by seed or by layering.

The value of plants grown in natural ways can hardly be made too much of; they are by far the most precious climbers of the northern world and they are as useful for cutting for the house as they are for good effect in the garden. They are not fastidious as to soil, but are sure to do well in ordinary garden loam deeply worked. They have been tried left to take their chance among bushes and trees; some have been lost while others have



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THE LAKE.

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ROSES AND YEW TREES.

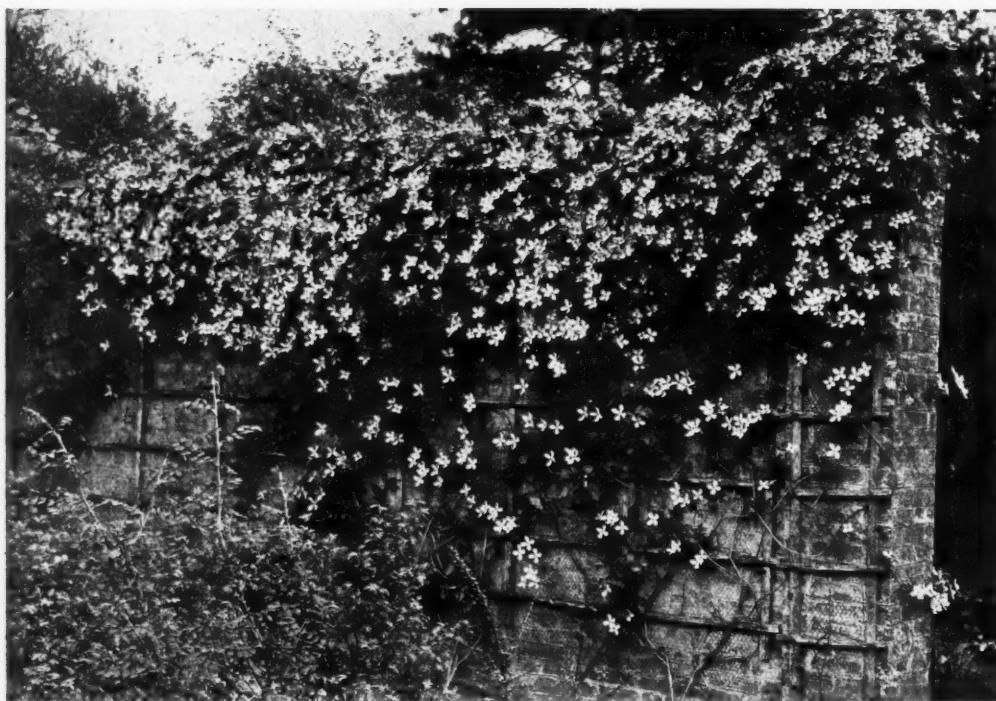
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IN THE PAVED GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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CLEMATIS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

run up the trees and have given more beautiful effects than in many a carefully planned garden arrangement. Plants of Perle d'Azur and other choicest kinds have been in fine health for over twenty years.

The earliest years of Mr. Robinson's possession of Gravetye had to be mainly devoted to the restoration and renovation of a neglected property. Fences were dilapidated and many were redundant, existing roads were inconvenient; woodland, fields and cottages all had to be taken in hand, and all was to be done with the view not only of thoroughly efficient use but also of preserving all natural beauty and of the gradual creation of fresh beautiful effects. In the owner's words: "Almost every field was dealt with; beauty was never lost sight of; nothing, from making a road to forming a fence, was done without considering its effect on the landscape from every point of view . . . any straight, hard, common fences, cutting the country up like a chess-board, were removed in favour of more picturesque dividing lines, often following the natural dividing lines of the bosom-like

then, small larches were planted between as nurse plants, to be removed at the proper time.

Well above the house there was a piece of sloping ground bearing a mixed plantation of common trees without any kind of beauty or interest. In the whole bank not one tree was of the slightest worth. They were cut down and burnt, and it seemed a good place for the making of a heath garden. It had not the advantage of the peaty soil of the moors, but only the ordinary brown loam of the district. All the hardy heaths of Europe were tried with scarcely a failure, and there is hardly a month in the year when the heath garden has not some bloom to show. Here are represented the hardy heaths of Britain and their varieties, the lovely Portuguese heath, which in twenty years has only once suffered from frost, cut down but not killed in the severe cold of 1895. Here also are the tree heaths of the Mediterranean region, both European and African, and the lovely pink bloomed heath of southern Spain. Among the best is the Connemara heath of western Ireland.



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FROM THE BOWLING-GREEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

In our land of many waters we have, perhaps, more opportunities for making beautiful water gardens than in any other in Europe. In the valley below the house at Gravetye an old hammer pond offers a home for the water lilies, of which there are now so many beautiful varieties; while it was evident that the banks were just the place for ornamental water-side plants, among which many kinds are natives. Many groups of water lilies were planted. For twenty years some of these have been in place and have never ceased to flower well; they have had no thinning or any other kind of attention. At first as bare as any horse pond with a belt of yellow earth around it, by enclosing and planting the banks with hardy shrubs and flowers it became the most interesting of gardens. The finely coloured water lilies are quite hardy, and bear hundreds of flowers at a time. The water being deep, thinning the shoots of the plants would be difficult without emptying the lake, and so the groups are left alone. They were planted in the naturally deposited mud, and never suffer from anything worse than the water rat.

There is no special enclosed gardening with spring flowers at Gravetye. The whole of the grassy land on the slope between the house and the ponds is in itself a garden of spring flowers. Here, as well as in the woodland and near the water,

are daffodils in countless thousands: no haphazard mixtures, but one fine sort at a time, showing the best it can do. Also in the grass are the charming autumn colchicums, reminding one of Alpine pastures, and in their respective seasons camassias and the brilliant scarlet windflower. In half-woody places, such as the old smuggler's lane that passes not far from the house, there are wood anemones, dog's-tooth violets, Solomon's seal, Anemone apennina and Spanish squills; on a warmer bank the Greek Anemone blanda; in copses where the grass grows thinly, hepaticas and lily of the valley; near the water, fritillaries and snowflake, day lily and water forget-me-not; in bushy places, yellow Spanish and white Portugal broom, and in true woodland, besides the planted daffodils, a wealth of its own primroses. Then, by the water are bold groups of the giant heracleum, willow-herbs and water-loving irises, also polygonums, scarlet balm and spiræas.

The words of the owner, the regenerator of English gardening, may aptly be quoted: "In this, as in other matters pertaining to fitness and beauty, each place is treated according to its own character. A garden should grow out of its own site if we are to have the best of it. One should think of the spot and what can best be done with it."

LITERATURE

A BOOK OF THE WEEK

Memories of Midland Politics (1885-1910), by Francis Allston Channing (Member for East Northamptonshire). (Constable.)

ORD CHANNING'S *Memories* may very likely be consulted by coming generations for reasons at present unsuspected by the author. In the course of time it must become an object of very great interest on the part of historians and scholars to ascertain what English people were thinking and doing in the years anterior to the Great War. One may search the world's records in vain for a parallel case. On one side a mighty Empire was industriously and tenaciously preparing for war. The final object of that war was to be the destruction of the British Empire, or, at any rate, "World Empire or Downfall" was the watchword of the Teutonic prophets. Such jealousies and ambitions on the part of a great people have existed before and been brought into actual play; but never has the victim been lulled to sleep so effectually as was the British Empire. It is true that here and there a deeper thinker or a closer observer than the rest pointed out what was likely to happen, but they were like rushlights in a fog, only serving to deepen the surrounding darkness.

The beginning of the war might very well go down to posterity as the Great Surprise. It simply astonished and dumfounded the British nation to learn on that fateful day of August, 1914, that war had been declared. Even then it was difficult to get the people to take it seriously. Soldiers went off singing and declaring that they would be home for Christmas. Many who were reckoned cool and dispassionate spectators thought that a campaign of two or three months would be the duration of the war. It was an eye-opener when Lord Kitchener in the House of Lords announced that he was basing his preparations on a three years' war, and that if it lasted longer he would ask some younger man to take the place he then occupied.

The reason of this great imperial surprise must seem very important to the investigator of the future, and it is very natural that he should take up a book like this one on Midland Politics with a view to trying to discover what the popular preoccupations of the moment were. He will not fail to find in it the key to the general unreadiness. His only difficulty will be in attaching any sense of reality to the bickerings and disputations which went on during the period in which Germany was massing and training her legions. There is scarcely a sign in these pages that those who professed and called themselves politicians took the trouble to ascertain what objects were being formed and nourished on the Continent of Europe.

Supposing that a similar volume were written by a Conservative of the same style as Lord Channing, one who combated the views held from a standpoint opposite to his own, but not a whit more elevated, there would be presented the spectacle of a great wrangle in which each partisan vituperated his opponent and praised his adherents. It would be found that in discussing what they thought great national questions nobody went very far or went very deep.

Lord Channing's peculiar *métier* was that of a land reformer. He was one of the early advocates of small holdings, but it never seems to have occurred to him to ask why this particular form of occupation had long been passing out of favour and could not be popularised under the conditions then prevalent. He blamed the landlords, he blamed the game laws, and looked askance at sportsmen, but he did not recognise the simple truth that if men are to be induced to take up any particular calling it will only be on account of the advantages arising personally to them from doing so. In Holland and Belgium the problem had been solved, because attention was devoted to making the land produce more remunerative crops than those grown in Great Britain. Take one example: every Continental country recognised the advantages, direct and incidental, to be derived from growing sugar beet. It provided them with a supply of sugar in the first instance, and in the second had the effect of causing the land to be much more thoroughly and highly cultivated. It seemed to be taken for granted that other kinds of human food, especially vegetables and fruit, could not be produced in this country so well as abroad, and in consequence there was growing up a vicious dependence upon others for our own necessities of life. One may read and re-read the various speeches and deliverances in these pages without finding a trace of this being realised. The fight is only about anise and cummin. It was the same way with the education question which figures conspicuously in these pages. It was inchoate when the author was representing Wellingborough and it remains so still, and must remain so until Mr. Fisher, or one of his successors, has the courage and ability to recognise that a really National School is not a school merely for the working classes. Democracy itself is only the shadow of a name until this step forward is made.

Now let us turn from considering what the Midland politicians did not do to what they did; but, before doing so, credit should be given to Lord Channing for one or two things which seem to show that in more favourable circumstances he might have taken a better line. For instance, when Lord Salisbury agreed to the surrender of Heligoland, the author claims that he did his utmost to oppose and defeat in the House of Commons this surrender. He saw that in German hands Heligoland would be fortified, and by its aid

the whole of the waters into which converge the Elbe, Weser, Eider and the Jahde, and the canal between the Baltic and the North Sea for a radius of forty miles from shore would become a German harbour. The cession makes a French blockade impracticable and gives Germany enormous facilities for rapid concentration of naval forces and sudden enterprises. Whether England herself might some time or other be the object of such enterprises may be worth considering.

This quotation is from a letter to the *Times*, written in June, 1890. He also saw that the Kaiser's visit to Palestine, though ostensibly meant to defend Christian traditions, was really "to befriend Abdul Hamid, and link himself with the worst cruelties of history." But these were not objects highly popular with his constituents, who belonged mostly, we gather, to the parochial type.

In the following passage there is a description of them which reminds us forcibly of the Scottish editor who "jocked wi' deeficulty."

There is much to be said for the playful, mocking, ironic style favoured by speakers like Birrell and Lord Rosebery, but this did not go down well with our serious and logical, and somewhat stubborn thinkers. Those who know the English mind find practical difficulties in encouraging this style on strongly felt questions, even where stories and jokes are eagerly welcomed.

By the by, anyone who will take the trouble to look over the large number of photographs of local celebrities with which these pages are adorned will very readily see that

"the playful, mocking, ironic style" would not go down very well with them. But against this is to be set the fact that Lord Channing was one of those who continually advocated the reduction of the funds devoted to armaments, on the plea that they could be more usefully directed to social legislation. For the rest, the topics discussed are those which made newspapers of the day a weariness to read. Not one of them was advancing the prosperity of the country by an iota, and no leader tried to enlighten the people as to the dangers that possibly might lie ahead of them, dangers which the old type of statesman, Lord Palmerston and those who were before and after, fully recognised.

IN THE GARDEN

RUNNER BEANS AND HARICOTS.

ONE lesson the war has brought home to us is that Haricots may be grown successfully in our gardens. Last year was anything but an ideal one for Haricots, but all the varieties I am about to mention gave splendid results. In the first place it should be perfectly understood that any of the Runner Beans and the so-called French Beans may be grown for winter use as Haricots. It is necessary to make this statement because the stocks of seed of some varieties, like the Dutch Brown, are limited, and there is not enough seed to go round; but this should not prevent anyone having space available from growing other varieties of Haricots, and so making a valuable addition to the national food supply.

I would like to mention an experiment that was tried last year, in the hope that it may prove helpful to others. A well known Daffodil grower and a raiser of new varieties was eager to grow food crops, but he found it impossible to do so because his beds were full of choice Daffodil seedlings that he had been selecting for years, and he had not the heart to discard them. It was suggested to him that he might try Haricot Beans between the Daffodils. The ground had been well cultivated and manured in the past, and he decided to try the experiment. Without disturbing the Daffodils the soil was lightly pricked over with a fork, and the seed sown about the middle of May. The results were surprisingly good. The seed was allowed to ripen on the plants, and in September, when the plants had turned brown, they were pulled up and hung in a stokehole and sheds to ripen off. When dry the Beans were shelled, and then stored away in tins in a cupboard for winter use. The Daffodil enthusiast writes to say that he has had a beanfeast every week—a source of pleasure and great consideration to his household on meatless days.

The following are among the best varieties I have grown: all of them should be sown in May. In all cases the green pods are delicious, but they should not be picked green if required as Haricots. It is the early pods which give the best yield of dried Beans.

Runner Beans.—The white-seeded varieties are preferred, although the coloured and mottled seeds are perfectly wholesome. Here are three excellent white Runners: Mammoth White, White Czar and White Emperor. All these mature early, and are better in flavour than the kiln-dried Butter Beans or grocer's Haricots. They are grown on sticks or poles like ordinary Runner Beans. A pint of seed is sufficient to sow a row about 100ft. long.

Other tall-growing varieties are Mont d'Or Waxpod, Tender and True, Phenomenon (a white-seeded Runner and very prolific) and Haricot de Soissons à rames, one of the most widely grown Haricots in France, growing about 6ft. high; its nearest equivalent in English lists seems to be Sutton's Tender and True.

Dwarf Varieties.—These should be sown in rows about 2ft. apart. The seeds should be sown about 4in. apart in double rows to each drill and covered with 2in. of soil. Green Gem (equivalent to the French Haricots Verts), Masterpiece. The Golden Waxpod, Barr's Evergreen (a great cropper; the Beans are light drab in colour), Webb's Dwarf Cluster, and last, but not least, the noted Dutch Brown (a prolific yielder, nutritious and of delicate flavour). This beautiful Brown Bean was introduced to this country through the Rev. W. Wilks, the esteemed Secretary of the Royal Horticultural Society.

Any of these Beans will give good returns in moderately rich soil. They are not particular whether it is light or heavy. Any ordinary garden soil, provided the position is open and sunny, will suit them.

The Dutch Brown Bean has come to stay, for it is one of the most welcome additions to the kitchen garden within recent years. Of the numerous reports we have heard of this variety, there has not been one word of complaint. All speak well of its cropping propensities and of the quality of the shiny brown seeds when cooked.

It is hoped that others will be spared disappointment similar to that related by Miss Willmott, who had such bad luck with her crop of Dutch Brown Beans. Her gardener

substitute, thinking that the Beans were finished for the year, cleared the ground on which they were growing early in September and threw them all on the bonfire!

Perhaps the greatest favourite among Haricots is the famous Haricot Vert, which is so popular in France. The seeds, which are small and of pale green colour, have been freely introduced to this country by soldiers coming home on leave from France. But there is no difficulty about procuring seed, for this variety is synonymous with Green Gem, a well known French Bean that has been grown here for years and may be obtained from all seedsman.

Burmese Way of Cooking Haricots.—Of the multiplicity of instructions we have read at different times on the way to cook Haricots, nothing, so far as our experience goes, has even approached the suggestion put forward by Dr. Pedley. His recipe, of Burmese origin, is to put a handful of dry Beans into a shallow basin full of water and let them soak for a day or two, then throw away the water, cover them with a cloth, and keep them damp until they germinate and little shoots half an inch long have grown. By this process of germination the starch of the seed is converted into maltose—a change set up by the diastase of the cells which surround the growing germ just as the starch of Barley grain is turned into malt. The seeds, having absorbed about their own bulk of water, become quite soft and the outer tough coat may be detached. In this state they may be boiled for a much shorter time, and what is more important, the Beans, in our opinion, are far more easily digested. We have tried Broad Beans, (dried) Haricots and Peas in this way, and consider it by far the most palatable method of bringing dried pulse to the table. They are cooked quicker and are more readily digested without loss of their nourishing qualities.

The process is one that is easily undertaken by the housewife, who will find that the Beans, after soaking, will sprout in about forty-eight hours if placed in a warm cupboard near to a kitchen fire, or in any other place with a temperature between, say, 60deg. Fahr. and 70deg. Fahr.

Dr. Pedley points out that in the Burmese markets Beans and Peas can always be purchased in this sprouting state, an example that might be followed in our stores to the advantage of the nation.

H. C.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SPRAYING FRUIT TREES AND BUSHES.

SIR,—Will you kindly let me know whether the black currant prunings sent herewith are affected by "big bud"? The bushes are fairly old and have not borne any fruit for the last two or three years, but under hard pruning have thrown out some good new wood. They have not been sprayed. Under the same treatment the red currants and gooseberries have given good crops. What is the best spray or wash to use on them at this time of year, and what on apple, pear and plum trees?—REGINALD J. HANBURY.

[The large swollen buds are attacked by the Big Bud mite, and as this pest is likely to migrate from one bush to another at an early date, we suggest that you adopt the following remedy, which has proved to be good: Use 2oz. of the best soft soap and 4oz. of quassia chips to one gallon of soft water. Steep the chips in cold water for some hours, then bring the water to boiling point and allow it to simmer for twenty minutes. Dissolve the soft soap in a separate vessel and add to the quassia liquor while warm. Spray with the mixture as soon as the currant leaves begin to unfold and repeat it at intervals of ten to fourteen days until the end of May. The black currant produces its fruit on the new wood, and in consequence, requires very different treatment to either red currants or gooseberries. Only the old growth should be cut away when pruning—it is the strong young growth made last year which will give the best fruit in the case of the black currant. As a general spray for fruit trees we advise the lime-sulphur spray, both as a fungicide and as an insecticide. It may be applied now. Place 8lb. of fresh quicklime in a wooden barrel, large enough to hold fifty gallons, and cover it with hot water. As soon as the lime begins to slake pour in 8lb. of flowers of sulphur, breaking up any lumps and stirring it to make a thorough mixture. Cover with canvas or sacking to keep in heat and allow to boil for twenty minutes, stirring occasionally. Make up to fifty gallons with water. Do not use a copper outfit for spraying.—ED.]

CORRESPONDENCE

THE HOPE OF IMMORTALITY.

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In the admirably written review of the essays upon immortality recently published, "P" bids us fall back upon the thoughts which contented the greatest minds; he proceeds to quote from Homer, Swinburne, Shakespeare, Christina Rossetti and Lockhart; from each he selects a phrase which speaks of a certain wistful hope, almost too good to be true. It is of Christina Rossetti a word must be said in this connection; it is true that she wrote in almost every mood of sadness, but one of her master-beliefs, which gave her joy in the midst of this world was her confidence in the life to come. She is always singing of Paradise. In "From House to Home" she writes of the life to be:

"Glory touched glory on each blessed head
Hands locked dear hands never to sunder more;
These were the new-begotten from the dead
Whom the great birthday bore."

Furthermore, could not the reviewer write again, choosing another group of the greatest minds—they could be easily found—who have rejoiced in the confident faith of immortality?—EDWARD SHILLITO.

THE STARLING AS A PET.

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—"Tinker," our pet starling, was hatched in the spring of 1914, and first saw the light of day from a beech tree in the garden. He is a general favourite and a great talker, greeting his friends from his perch in the kitchen, where he is allowed to roam at his own sweet will, with, "Hullo!" "Good morning!" "Go to bed!" "Where's the stick?" This latter is kept for discipline, as he is so full of mischief and curiosity, digging his beak into everything which comes within reach. His greatest pleasure is to dig up the various geraniums and bulbs which adorn the window sills; he seems to take an especial delight in uprooting these. Fear is unknown to him, but he can "scold" with a vengeance if he is in the least annoyed, and he will alight on his mistress's hand and peck her furiously if she remonstrates with him. "Tinker" has many friends at the front (alas! some are no more), so his mistress started a collecting box on their behalf to provide a few extra comforts and tobacco. Up to the present "Tinker" has collected £24, and he has had many grateful letters from lads at the front, thanking him for "doing his bit"!—E.

AN OWL'S NEST AT THE FRONT.

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—My battalion is at present in a part of the line on the Western Front which is, just now, so calm and unruffled that one would hardly suspect the presence of the war. The country is pleasantly undulating and is well wooded, though on our side of the line every tree has been felled and every village destroyed by the Hun who formerly lived here. There are few shell holes, and immediately behind our trenches there stretches a rolling expanse of fields in which partridges and larks are now nesting. I have to take a working party daily to construct trenches in these fields, and as we go to and from our work we often "set up" a large brown owl, which rises from the ground and flies off to a neighbouring copse. I now find that she is nesting here. The owl is comfortably installed in the middle of the field, and is occupying a nest from which she has evidently evicted the lawful owner, for, not content with her own three eggs, she is sitting on one belonging to the partridge. I have never heard of an owl taking such a leaf from the cuckoo's book, though I believe they are known to evict starlings and rooks, and I would certainly believe that an owl's morals would hardly stop at that. I am watching the nest carefully, and am anxious to see whether she will hatch out all four eggs and whether she will eat all the young birds or any of them. I am afraid she gets rather a lot of disturbance. No doubt you will have had many similar experiences to this, but it was new to me, and was quite a change from "wars and rumours of wars."—E. P. (Second-Lieutenant).

REARING CALVES ON GOATS' MILK.

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The query which you forward to me raises a novel question and one of which I have no personal experience, nor do I know of anyone who

has attempted to rear calves on goats' milk. There is, however, no reason why the calves should not thrive on such nourishment, and, of course, a still further saving may be accomplished during the later stages of hand-rearing by weaning them on to one of the several calf meal foods on the market. The calves must be entirely removed from their mothers and from all supplies of cows' milk, as alternate meals of cow and goat milk would be likely to derange the digestive organs. For this reason their acquaintance with the goat milk should be made upon an empty stomach. The goats' milk will certainly have to be diluted with water, as a study of the appended analyses shows. These figures are, naturally, based on *average* results obtained from various samples of cow and goat milk, and cannot be regarded as constant. The constituents of milk are influenced by a variety of circumstances, even when supplied from the same animal, such as the time of the year, period from calving or kidding, food supply, etc., and careful observation will be necessary until the correct degree of dilution in each instance is discovered. Sickness after a meal would indicate that the milk is too rich and requires still further dilution.

ANALYSES OF COW AND GOAT MILK.

	Water.	Casein.	Albumin.	Ash.	Milk Sugar.	Fat.
Cow . . .	87.17	3.02	0.53	0.71	5.88	3.69
Goat . . .	85.71	3.20	1.09	0.76	4.40	4.78

—ROSSLYN MANNERING.

"THE GENTLEMAN WHO PAYS THE RINT."

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Now that the "gentleman who pays the rint" is so much before the public, and to keep pigs or not to keep pigs has become a question of national importance, perhaps this photograph may interest your readers. It shows some young pigs about six weeks old enjoying life on a sunny south slope at Cricket St. Thomas, Chard, the seat of Mr. F. J. Fry, J.P., D.L. They are the sow's second litter, the remaining ten of fourteen born on Christmas Day.—C.

THE DESTRUCTION OF TREES.

[To the EDITOR.]

SIR,—With some diffidence, yet much feeling, the writer wishes to draw attention to the wholesale destruction of trees which is now taking place. From what one hears, it is general everywhere; certainly it is very much in evidence in Cheshire. It is probably quite true that, in consequence of the war, British timber is absolutely needed, and this being so, we must view the thinning out of woods, however unpleasant, as a war-time necessity and without grumbling—always assuming that we find the work to be carried out with care, discretion and sympathy. What we should be up in arms against, however, is the ruthless and callous destruction of wooded places—trees, undergrowth and all that is beautiful round about them. It is highly important that the planting of young trees should be kept well in mind these days. But while the felling of woodland trees is, within limits, somewhat of a necessity, what is to be said of the destruction of the beautiful trees of lane and field? This surely is, for the most part, far from necessary. It means the spoiling of the countryside. All day just now the sound of the woodman's axe is in the air and it is not a happy sound. Is it not possible to cry halt? It takes a short time to fell a tree, but a very long time to grow one. This winter there seems to be a craze for chopping wood, just as last winter there developed a craze for killing birds. The latter was the outcome of hasty and unbalanced judgment and did infinite harm, and there is little doubt that the present craze is little better. We cannot afford to let these grand trees of lane and mead be cut down without protest. The landscape can never be the same without them, and, from a practical standpoint, their loss is serious. The shade they offer is of great value to livestock in summer; they are an oasis in a desert of summer heat. The fact that corn is now being grown in many of these fields does not reduce the value of the trees where they stand. To destroy the trees is to drive away many useful birds from the neighbourhood. In the windy boughs the mistlethrush sings to the coming spring. There, too, the kestrel rests in his quest for mice, and owls at nightfall. The cuckoo comes there, and many little birds—the farmer's allies—are always about the branches. We need not grudge the trees the ground they occupy. Far from it. "Alas!" cried William Cobbett, in the course of his "Rural Rides," "what, in point of beauty, is a country without woods and lofty trees?" The writer hopes that these remarks will lead others to do all that is in their power to save the noble trees of our countryside.—J. J. C.



SOME ASSETS OF THE NATION.

AN ANCIENT WHEAT STACK.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In turning over some old photographs recently I came across one which is not without interest at the present time. The history of it is connected with the Crimean War. Twin and bachelor brothers lived on a farm near Harrogate, called Tatefield Hall. During the Crimean War, in the year 1855, they harvested two stacks of corn—wheat was then at the high price of 97s. per quarter. At this price one of the brothers sold his stack, but the other swore he would not sell his until he obtained 100s. per quarter. Unfortunately for him the war terminated in the following March. The farmer kept his word and the stack remained in position for forty years, when the estate passed into the hands of a nephew, I think, who had the stack threshed. It produced eighteen quarters, but of a quality only fit for chicken corn. It was in remarkably good condition considering its age. The wheat had been stacked on a raised platform, which had effectually protected it against the ravages of rats and mice; it was, however, evident that it had provided a snug home



A STACK WHICH STOOD FOR FORTY YEARS.

for probably thousands of sparrows. The outside of the stack was quite black with age; the thatch had been renewed at intervals as it was required. Probably in after years it was kept in position as a sort of hobby by the owner. Great interest was evinced in the locality when it was known that the stack was to be threshed. The late Mr. W. Grange, the historian of "The Forest of Knaresborough," undoubtedly knew of the existence of the stack in 1860, at which period, it was evident from its condition, that it had been in existence many years. He obtained from the threshing a number of grains in order to test the vegetative power. The seed was mainly what was known as "Old Red" or "Red Scape" with an admixture of "Square-headed White." Two ears taken at random contained—red, 36 grains; and white, 31 grains. Mr. Grange provided a suitable medium and planted his test seeds, carefully watched and attended to them, but after 103 days there was no sign of germination. In order to test the point as to whether the medium had been suitable or not he planted a pea in it on April 29th; this sprouted on May 6th and afterwards grew vigorously. He also planted a hard, dry bean in it on May 10th; this sprouted on the 16th of the same month, and on July 12th was 22in. high; so it was quite evident the wheat had lost its vitality, although apparently sound and in fair condition, quite an insignificant proportion only having been attacked by "mites."—R. FORTUNE.

A PATRIOTIC GOLF CLUB.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The proprietors of the celebrated Shirley Park Golf Links have retained nine holes for play. The remainder has been ploughed up for potatoes,



GOLF MAKES WAY FOR FOOD PRODUCTION.

roots and grain. Inset is seen one of the Government tractor ploughs at work ploughing up the seventh fairway. The club-house, one of the largest in England, with the hotel and dormy house, is used as a hospital for the R.F.C. flying officers, of whom there are resident about 100 in various stages of convalescence. A pig-breeding farm produces 600 pigs per annum.—S.

HEREDITY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In COUNTRY LIFE of February 2nd "Trenton" argues that Bend Or, because of the black spots and markings which he showed, was not a "whole" chestnut. The descendants of Stockwell have frequently these birthmarks, and it is I think somewhat stretching the point to assert that on account of their presence Bend Or would not be correctly described as a "whole" chestnut.—BUCHAN.

USES FOR BUTTERMILK.

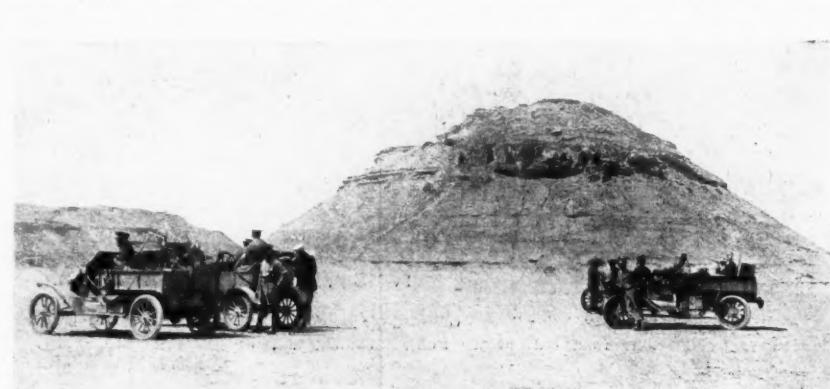
[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I wonder if any of your readers can give me recipes for using buttermilk other than in scones; is it possible to make some sort of cheese with it?—G. LEES.

A CAR PATROL IN THE DESERT.

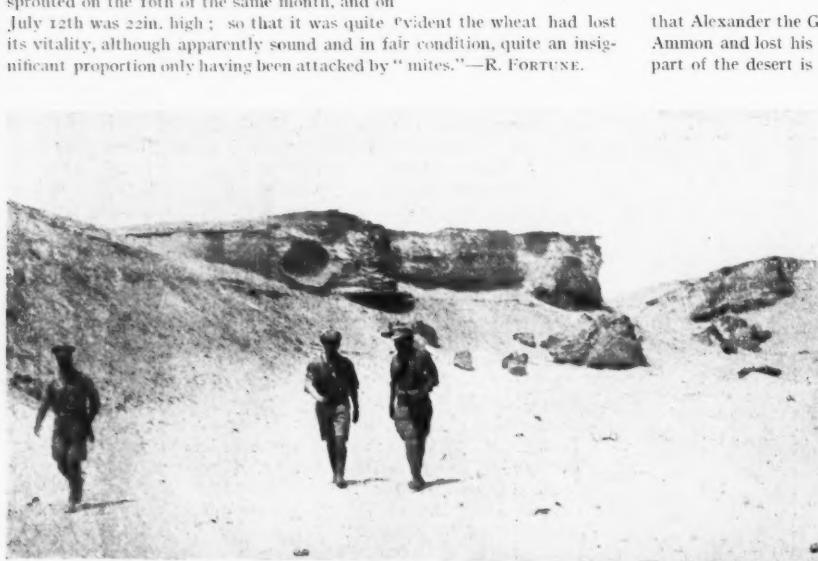
[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The enclosed photographs were taken during a light car patrol in the Western Desert to the north-east of Siwa. There is a legend to the effect



WHERE AN OLD ROMAN POT WAS FOUND ON THE LOW LEVEL.

that Alexander the Great visited Siwa to consult the famous oracle of Jupiter Ammon and lost his way between Quattara and Gara. The country in this part of the desert is most inhospitable and waterless, and Alexander is said to have ascended to the top of Iskander Mountain in the hopes of seeing the track to Siwa. There was no sign, however, of the stone cairns by which Bedouins mark the caravan routes, and Alexander gave himself up for lost, when he saw a crow flying in a south-westerly direction. Presuming that it would fly towards water, he and his party followed it and eventually arrived safely in Siwa. The desert in this part of the world is mainly a huge limestone plateau worn into vast canyons or wadis by rain and weather. Some of these canyons are some twenty square miles in area, and make motoring anything but pleasant. There is no water and no vegetation except in some of the lowest levels, where in the clay pans camel thorn and mimosa bushes find a precarious existence. A few gazelle may be met with, while farther north on a belt of land that runs parallel with the sea, and which the Bedouins cultivate in patches, may be found an odd hyena or two and many jackals and foxes. Mount Iskander is one of the highest points in the Libyan Desert, and, until the war, had not been visited by a white man.—S. J.



ONE OF THE PASSES IN THE LOW DESERT.

THE STOAT AND THE ERMINE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—My brother, somewhere in France, writes: "—says I am wrong in saying that a stoat with its white winter coat is an 'ermine.' He says an ermine is an entirely distinct animal, and is found elsewhere than in England. To settle the point, would you write to the Editor of COUNTRY LIFE and ask him which of us is right, and send me his answer." I wonder if you would be good enough to insert an answer to the above question in COUNTRY LIFE.—E. L. G. T.

[It is a common error to suppose the stoat and ermine to be different animals, but as a matter of fact they are the same, the difference in the colour of their coats being caused by the greater or less degree of heat to which they have been subjected. The change occurs through *blanching* of the fur, not by substitution of white for dark hairs. In this country, the stoat is very uncertain in its change of fur, and individuals seem to yield to or resist the effects of cold weather quite differently; it is, however, never sufficiently blanched in England for the fur to be of commercial value.—E.D.]

THE CULTIVATION OF SUNFLOWER SEED.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The reference in your leading article of March 16th to the "Cultivation of Sunflower Seed" as "one of the hitherto neglected industries on the land" has suggested that this photograph of a giant plant may be worth printing as a corollary to your leader.

As the size of sunflower heads, and therefore the weight of seeds contained in them, is generally in proportion to their height, the possession of a few such giants will mean much in the coming autumn to the poultry keeper, and it is important that gardeners who can devote some space in their borders to a flower of such ornamental usefulness should not let the time for planting go by.—SUSSEX WORSHIPPER.



A SUPPLY OF POULTRY FOOD.

giving the scheme a really fair trial. Unless these two points are properly dealt with, failure will result.—T. HAMILTON FOX.

UNCONTROLLED DOGS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have been all my life an enthusiastic cynophilist, and lately have busied myself in attempting to counter the attacks of certain cranks who advocate the wholesale slaughter of dogs. But I am bound to confess that much of my ardour has been discounted by a certain class of owner (generally of the female gender) which cannot, or will not, attempt to keep its pets under proper control, but allows them to "yap and yowl" day and night and to make themselves perfect pests and nuisances to long-suffering neighbours. It is such people who endanger the very existence of well disciplined and desirable dogs. "Authority" has made a gigantic error in forcing the Kennel Club to abandon the registration of pedigree puppies born after September 8th, 1917, during the continuance of the war, while making no effort to restrict the promiscuous propagation of hordes of hideous and useless mongrels which disgrace our cities, towns and villages. At Sir George Cave's suggestion I submitted a scheme for the better control and utilisation of dogs to the Home Office and the Exchequer; but it was held that "to adopt it would entail legislation of a controversial nature, which would not be expedient for the moment"—or words to that effect. But *much* might be done without fresh legislation.—HARDING COX, F.Z.S., President of The Pedigree Dog Owners' Association.

ZULU RICKSHAW MEN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The letter interested me very much. As your correspondent says, these Zulu rickshaw men are indeed "hefty." Many of them are over 6ft. in height and of splendid physique. The head-dresses in his photographs are certainly fine examples, but



A SPLENDID HEAD-DRESS.

this snap-shot of the man who pulled my rickshaw shows, I think, a finer one. Note the balls on either side of the forehead.—H. S. P.

AN OLD SUSSEX DOVECOTE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—There are some rather interesting things to be seen at the farm tenanted by Mr. Brown at Patcham. The illustration shows an old Sussex dovecote. The oldest inhabitants do not know the history of this building; they say "it has always been there." It is circular in shape. The walls are lined with niches for the birds' nests. Perhaps the most interesting feature is the revolving ladder, by means of which the nests were reached. The central pillar of oak, carrying the ladder, is probably as ancient as the building itself. There is also at this

farm a water-lift, which was worked by a donkey or pony. It is something like a mill water-wheel, and about the same size. The principle is that of the squirrel's wire-wheel cage. There is an opening through which the animal was put into the wheel, and he started on a long treadmill walk. The revolving wheel worked a crank-shaft which raised the water from a well close by. The dovecote and the well have been disused for many years. It is regrettable that no photographs of these two interiors can be got, even by flashlight—the places are too small.—B. K.



AN ANCIENT DOVECOTE.

GUILLEMOTS' EGGS AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR HENS' EGGS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—After reading the excellent illustrated article on "The Guillemots on the North-East Coast" I thought possibly the enclosed print might interest some of your readers, and more especially so now that hens' eggs are so scarce and dear, and likely to remain so. The Bempton and Speeton Cliffs during the latter part of May and June should provide an exceptionally well stocked larder from



VARIETIES IN THE SHAPE AND COLOUR OF THE GUILLEMOT'S EGGS.

BITTER-PIT IN APPLES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In my garden here I have a good many old fruit trees, and a large number of the apples from last year's crop are speckled all over the outside and also the inside with brownish spots, almost as if they had a sort of apple smallpox. I send a piece of an apple with this letter, and shall feel very much obliged if you will kindly tell me what this disease is, whether the apple so affected is unhealthy for food, and what steps should be taken to cure it. What is the cause of it? The soil here is very good for about 1 ft. down with a clay subsoil.—W. R. PORTAL, West Norwood.

[The apple sent for inspection is attacked by bitter-pit, a failing common, more or less, every season to soft-fleshed apples. Some of the brown spots show through the skin of the apple, but other spots are embedded in the flesh of the fruit, and not in any way connected with the surface. This is a typical case of bitter-pit. Such fruits are poor in quality and can only be used for cooking. Bitter-pit in apples is responsible for considerable injury to the crops not only in the south of England, but also in Victoria, Australia, and the Cape. It has been under observation for years, but so far as we know the cause of the trouble still remains a matter of conjecture. It is not a disease in the usual meaning of the term, that is to say, it is not due to bacteriological or fungus attack, but it is attributed to some physiological cause. It is probably due to climatic conditions as, although fairly common in southern counties, it seldom makes its appearance in the north of England or in Scotland. It seems to be most common in dry seasons, and it is probable that drought at a time when the apples are swelling is the

chief source of the trouble. There is no known remedy, but we suggest that attention should be given to the water supply during the development of the fruit.—ED.]

EPITAPH ON AN AUCTIONEER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As your journal is greatly used by auctioneers and estate agents, the following epitaph may be of interest to many members of the profession, and as well amuse the general reader :

"ERECTED BY PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION TO PERPETUATE THE MEMORY OF

JOSEPH WRIGHT

AN EMINENT AUCTIONEER FOR MANY YEARS RESIDENT OF THIS PARISH.

(Here follow data.)

Beneath this stone; facetious wight;
Lies all that's left of poor Joe Wright.
Few hearts with greater kindness warmed,
Few heads with knowledge more informed,
With brilliant wit, and humour broad
He pleased both peasant, squire, and lord.
At length old Death, with visage queer,
Assumed Joe's trade of auctioneer;
Made him the lot to practise on
With Going! Going! and anon
He knocked him down, so poor Joe's gone."

The original is to be seen in the churchyard at Corby, Lincolnshire.—GEORGE W. METCALFE.

ENGLISH FURNITURE IN SIR GEORGE DONALDSON'S COLLECTION.—IV

BY PERCY MACQUOID.

HERE was not space in Part III of these articles to permit the inclusion of the handsome cabinet Fig. 1, although it belongs to the first period of Charles II coloured marqueterie, when the flowers, etc., were not closely connected. The design on the doors much resembles that found on tables commencing *circa* 1675, where spandrel panels of coloured flowers and green ivory leaves on an ebony ground surround the centre of an oval and four short strappings inlaid with oyster-shelled walnut, the

bandings and framings to the cabinet and drawers being of holly and bleached walnut. The original stands of these cabinets, being generally made of walnut, have in most instances disappeared; but in this case the wood employed is chestnut bleached to a light colour, a heavy, bitter wood which resists the worm, and is therefore capable of sustaining a heavy weight.

The brilliance of this furniture when new must have been remarkable, for on the inside portions where light and air have not penetrated, the original colours of the inlay can be seen, though on the outside time has dulled the brightest lines. In

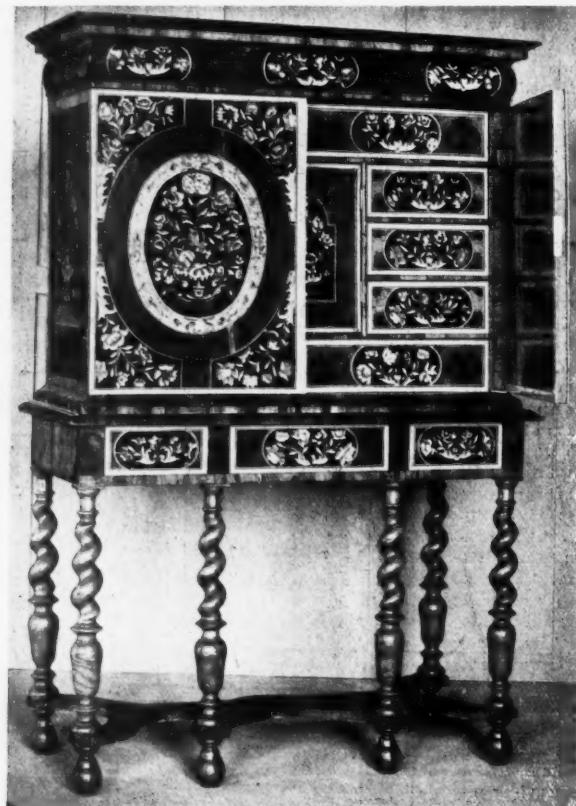


FIG. 1.—WALNUT CABINET AND STAND, inlaid with coloured woods and green ivory leaves on ebony panels surrounded by walnut oyster pieces and holly bandings. Height, 5 ft. 4 ins.; width, 3 ft. 6 ins. Date, *circa* 1678.



FIG. 2.—CABINET AND STAND, veneered with oyster pieces and various cuttings of walnut. Height, 5 ft.; width, 3 ft. 4 ins. *Circa* 1686.

new Charles II houses the rooms were high, with tall panels of light oak, which were gradually supplanted by those of painted deal. By 1670 furniture was scarce in London—the Great Fire had spared little—and as countless and priceless tapestries, pictures and furniture disappeared with the 436 acres of houses that were destroyed, this rather strong and highly coloured marqueterie came as a welcome restoration and replaced many important losses. At the same time Lely, Kneller and their school started what can almost be termed a manufactory of bright coloured portraits, which, together with the gilt furniture, high looking-glasses, needlework and profusion of china, dressed

exactly the same. The two cabinets form an interesting contrast of almost contemporary work.

Needlework in petit and gros point, an industry that occupied a very important portion of women's time, was used for curtains, carpets, wall hangings in small rooms, settees, stools, chairs, cushions and even tops of card tables, a very favourite design for the latter being a portion of a pack of cards, and this kind of covering has outlasted the velvets, silks and leather and silk embroideries employed for covering furniture. Thousands of card tables were made between 1680 and 1780, the century when card playing in England attained its greatest height. Fig. 4 is a *piquet* table, once evidently covered with needlework. The frame and top have deep curves to accommodate the figures of the players, while at either end slides draw out to receive the silver candlesticks. The frame is veneered with fine burr walnut and stands on six balustered legs of this same wood, those at the back swinging out to support the flap. These tables when not in use stood against the wall, as hardly any were made with four-sided decorations, our ancestors at this time evidently objecting to small tables and chairs standing out in a room. The beautiful card table Fig. 3 possesses its original needlework top, still showing brilliant colour, set in an undulating border of bleached burr walnut, with which the counter dishes, candle slides and frame are veneered; the legs headed by plain shells show the straight simplicity of the end of Anne's reign.

There are so many varieties of tables in this interesting collection that the selection of important types for illustration becomes almost invidious; but one that should be singled out is the beautiful example Fig. 5. This console table is so unusual, so remarkable, that it demands accurate description. The mahogany top is inlaid with a border of engraved brass, the thickness being decorated



FIG. 3.—WALNUT CARD TABLE; flap covered in needlework, with sunk walnut dishes for counters and sliding brackets for candles; the frame and legs are of fine burr walnut. Height, 2ft. 4ins.; width, 2ft. 8ins. Circa 1714.

up the tall, quiet panelling. This brilliant and expensive marqueterie could only have been made for the very rich, and was supplemented by a more simple treatment of walnut veneer for a class that could not afford the gorgeous furnishing. Fig. 2 is a simple cabinet of this kind, where the entire effect is obtained by veneers of different cross-cuttings of the walnut boughs, producing the usual oyster pieces placed in contrast with the marbling of the figure cut lengthways. The inner drawers are veneered with the light, sappy portions of the wood nearest the bark and its darker centre; the legs of the stand show the same pretty twist as Fig. 1: the star and drop handles being

with an applied openwork banding of the same metal; a very bold egg and gilt tongue moulding heads the frieze, the lower ribbon and rosette members being treated in a similar manner; the console supports consist of scrolled female-headed terms magnificently carved and scaled, and edged with a gilt strapping. The feet are scrolled, headed with lion masks and rest on an undulating plinth with a gilt rosette border; the colour of the piece is that of dark horse chestnut. The facility of execution and the admirable drawing and modelling of the faces suggest those of a foreign craftsman resident in England. It may be remembered that much of the mahogany and gilt furniture at Houghton

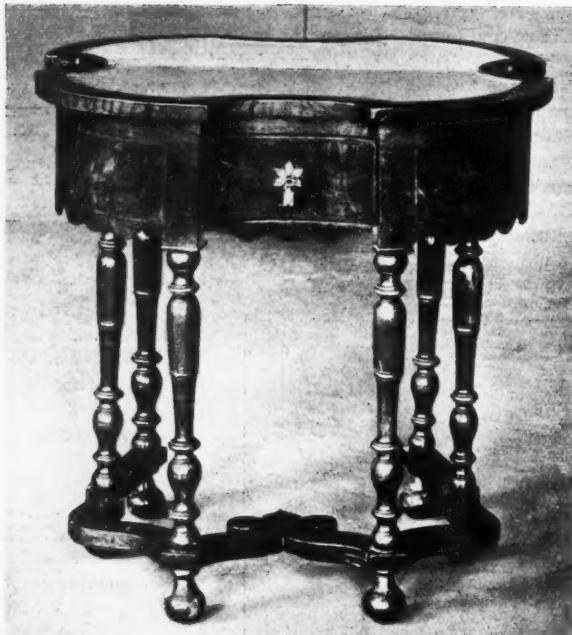


FIG. 4.—PICQUET TABLE, of walnut, with flap top; the frame is veneered with burr walnut and stands on balustered legs. Height, 2ft. 5ins.; length, 2ft. 6ins. Circa 1700.



FIG. 5.—CONSOLE TABLE, mahogany and gilt with brass bandings and inlaid to top, supported by six female headed terms finishing in lion masked and scrolled feet. Height, 2ft. 9ins.; length, 3ft. 8ins.; depth, 2ft. 1in. Circa 1725.



FIG. 6.—MAHOGANY SIDE TABLE with the carvings gilt, standing on straight cabriole legs, fluted and finishing in lion's feet. Height, 3ft.; length, 3ft. 10ins. Date 1730-35.

was carried out about this time by Italians brought over for this purpose by Kent.

Side tables in mahogany, of true table shape, were constantly made after 1725, and shortly after came into general use, often being made large with a marble top for sideboard use. In the period preceding that known as Chippendale the carving on mahogany furniture was sometimes gilt, as on the small side table Fig. 6. The top is mahogany edged with a well finished gadroon, and the cabrioles of the legs are straight as they leave the shoulders, which are carved on all four sides with an acanthus gilded and full of movement. The Greek key pattern of the frieze and central shell is in bold scale and yet in perfect harmony with the flutings and lion's paw feet of the rather delicate legs. The proportions and consummate craftsmanship shown in this piece should arouse speculation as to its authorship. It is unfortunate that little record remains of the master cabinet-makers who designed and carried out early mahogany furniture.

FLOWER-HUNTING ON THE ROOF OF THE WORLD

On the Eaves of the World, by Reginald Farrer (2 vols.; Edward Arnold, 1917, 30s. net), is the book of an enthusiast, the record of a great ambition, long nursed, long planned, and finally carried out, to the author's complete satisfaction. And if an expedition of this nature is brought to a *satisfactory* conclusion, it must indeed be a success! Mr. Farrer is a horticulturist, *not* a dried-plant collector—a botanist, but a hunter of flowers, who, having tracked, discovered and collected them, desires to bring them home in order to introduce and acclimatise them to his native island. Could there be a more delightful or a more absorbing hobby? And we reap the benefit, hoping to be able to grow *Primula alsophila* and *Meconopsis lepida* here in our English gardens! The very names set one's heart throbbing for those alpine slopes twixt the forest and the snow, where Nature seems to condense all her energy and even to exhaust herself in an attempt to crowd all her most lovely colour, beauty of form, and most glorious sounds into that last life zone beneath the eternal snows. What is more lovely than *Primula optata*? Could there be a form more seductive than that of the hare-bell poppy, or a call more inspiring than the cry of the snow-cock? Mr. Farrer here records the first of his two seasons' exploration on the Kansu-Tibetan Borders, in the interest of horticulture and forestry. He covered a wide area of little known country and did systematic work.

From a scientific point of view his expedition must have been a very great success. His "Eaves" are those eastern declivities of the Plateau of Tibet where the "roof of the world" dips to the great plains of Cathay, and rivers born at an altitude of 15,000ft. above sea-level come out of the country into a wonderland of deeply furrowed valleys. With "an absolutely perfect friend and helper" in Mr. Purdom, the expedition worked the south-west corner of Kansu in 1914, wintered in Lanchow, and moved further north in 1915. Mr. Farrer is keenly alive to the full responsibilities of a traveller; he sees and records much of great interest on things quite outside his own special sphere. He is imbued with the seriousness of his "Quest," with a sense of duty to observe and record all that strikes him, whether it is the peculiar social conditions in which he found himself, or the magnitude of Nature around him. On one page it is the maddening formalities of Chinese etiquette; on the next a word-picture of glade, coppice and lawn on a high Tibetan ridge.

The search for, and his extraordinary delight in, flowers occupies the greater part of his energies and his book. But here and there he lets himself go on things Chinese, and his observations are of very great interest. They touch on an untapped region. This is not hackneyed Southern China, but a remote border province where Celestial tries to govern Tebos and wars with half-savage nomad tribes. It is the North-West frontier of India, as compared with Calcutta or Bombay. Mr. Farrer had few forerunners, even in other lines of scientific research, and we could well have done with a great deal more in the way of general descriptions of physical and social conditions. Although his detail is marvellous, and he gives us a perfect miniature, he is unable to sketch for us, in broad outline, the characteristics of the country, scenery and people. His flow of language never fails, whether in Chinese "Yamen" or on the summit of "Thunder Crown"—a gift rarely found in a traveller! Some of his similes are good, even if a little laboured: a kestrel is "a beautiful aeroplane-like creature, with a stern little wise Egyptian face." Takins are "ungainly beasts like the souls of Hebrew financiers reincarnate in huge grotesque cows!" But we do not care for "the flamboyance of its bloody beauty" as applied to a poppy! But Mr. Farrer is an enthusiast, and he is apt to over-value. He sees in China greater wisdom than he does in his own country. The crippled Chinese lady is more appealing to him than is the striding Western. Buddhism stands up like "an impregnable wall above the feeble scrabbling of the missionaries at its base." However, even his beloved flowers come in for a full share of extravagant language; and this generally denotes unusual, if not abnormal, ideas. His poppy has petals "like Catherine-wheels woven from the purple prisms of the rainbow!" And a cotoneaster decks itself "in a garniture of jet boot buttons!" The map supplied to these first two volumes is by no means adequate; we should like to see the narrative of the second year's work accompanied by a map illustrating in detail the itinerary of the whole expedition.